



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

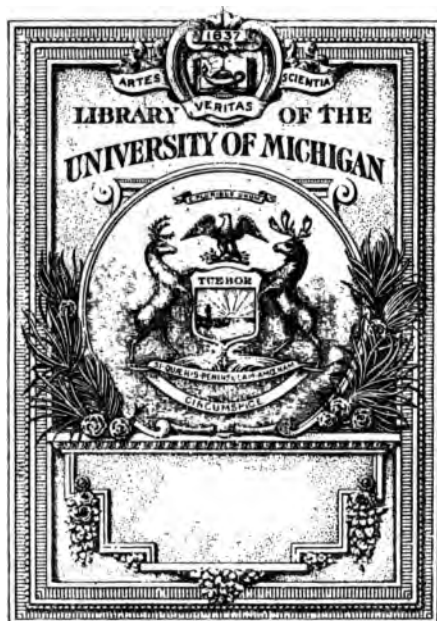
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

6m

THE MAN MOHAMMED



• A DRAMATIC CHARACTER-SKETCH •



822.8
S786m 87

THE
MAN MOHAMMED

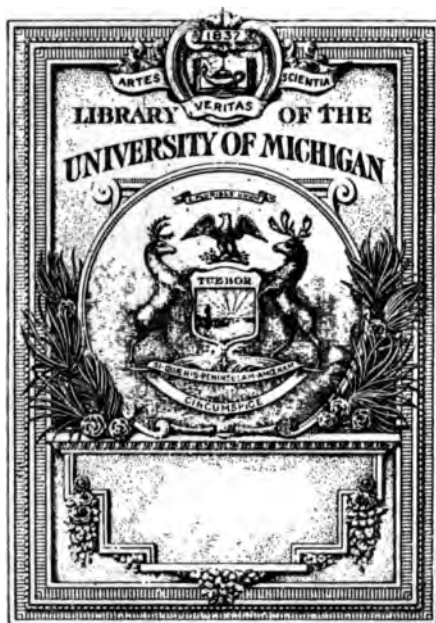
A DRAMATIC CHARACTER-SKETCH

BY

TOM STECKER



CAMBRIDGE MASS.
THE CO-OPERATIVE PRESS, 114 AUSTIN ST.
1900



1421
57822 57

THE

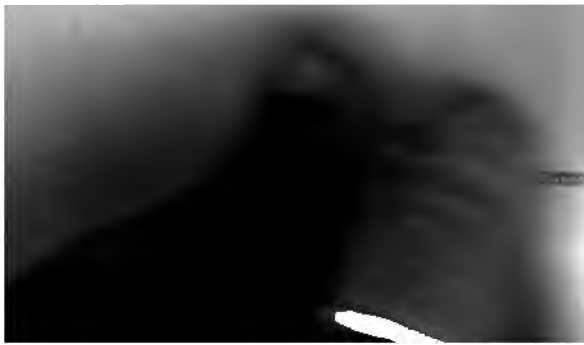
MAN MOHAMMED

A DRAMATIC CHARACTER-SKETCH

BY



TOM STECKER



el
ne
ent,

h we
n who
o have





100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100%

PREFACE.

Without attempting the production either of an oriental drama for the stage or of a complete dramatic biography of Mohammed, the author of the following work has essayed simply to outline a character portrait of the prophet and law-giver of Islamism. In order to do this within a narrow scope, he has omitted many historical and traditional details; disregarded, in some instances, chronological consequence; occasionally introduced incidents of little logical relevancy to the story, these serving but to cast a ray of light upon the character of the prophet and the peculiarity of the people and conditions with which the man had to deal; summoned the genii and other fabled spirits of the Orient to his aid; and, finally, to bring the drama to a rapid close, substituted the fatal potion in Mohammed's home for the slowly operating "poison of Khaibar."

If he has succeeded in impressing the reader with his own conception of the personality of this genius of the desert, who, but for an over-impulsive temperament, a rampant imagination and a personal ambition, might, in his time, have become a worthy teacher of crude paganism, the writer will have reason to feel rewarded for the effort of the sporadic moments spent on the work: moments without inspiration, without encouragement, and prepared for by but a very limited erudition.

It is a well-known fact that all generations of which we have historical records have brought forth men and women who have either received, imagined they received, or claimed to have

received glimpses of eternal facts through the veil of mortality. Although the Christian world accepts only the life and teachings of the unapproachable Man of Nazareth as divine, yet as their own gospel admonishes them to "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good," even the most orthodox Christian lacks authority for hesitating to investigate the dogmata and the careers both public and private of religious pioneers, out of fear of either committing sacrilege or becoming contaminated. It is for bigotry blindly to worship and blindly to condemn genius.

Let scholars of all religious confessions include among their researches the study of men who deserve the name of religious leaders; let them consider them not as either demigods or demons, but as men; let them endeavor to extract cogent truths and virtues from human follies and inconsistencies in doctrine and career of their subjects; let them remove the nimbus and halo of mystery from the brows of these humble tutors and present them as our peculiarly constituted brothers, who have imparted to us their diversely conceived convictions concerning truths of the metaphysical realm—and the greatest curse of the ages, religious antagonism, which even in our day continues to culminate in massacre and war, will, in time, become an obsolete barbarism, while an approaching step toward uniformity of worship among the nations will be accomplished.

This pamphlet would serve its purpose by merely creating additional interest in Mohammed and Mohammedanism. The absurdities found in the books of the Koran and the demoralizing tendency of many of its doctrines are as apparent to enlightened thinkers as the weaknesses of its author. It seems hardly possible, judging by late events, that the religion of fire and sword will survive in its original character another century of industrial, political, social and educational evolution; it is rather conceivable that the time is near at hand when the crea-

cent will either cease to stand for military despotism, superstition, degradation of woman, and chattel slavery, or disappear entirely from the minaret and the standard of the warrior. Yet let it be conceded that even this ensign has, wherever hitherto borne by the conquering zealot, been the herald of some religious thought and moral precept that deserves to outlive the Moham-medan creed in its entirety by millenniums.

THE MAN MOHAMMED

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MOHAMMED — Prophet of Islam.

ABU BEKER — One of his first converts, afterward first calif.

OMAR — A later convert. Second calif.

ABU TALEB — Mohammed's uncle and foster-father.

ALI — Son of Abu Taleb. Fourth Calif.

HAMZA — Another uncle of Mohammed.

ABU SOFIAN } Chiefs of the Koreishites.
ABU JAHL }

AMRU — A young poet, son of a Meccan courtesan.

BEHRAM AND ASSAD — Arabian merchants.

AMGRAD — A Meccan youth.

CASSIM — Son of Amgrad and Margiana.

ZEYD — Adopted Son of Mohammed. Formerly his bondsman.

CAMEL-DRIVERS AND MERCHANT OF MECCA.

ZINCHI, HABIB AND BADOURA — Slaves of the Merchant.

OBEIDAH } Warriors of Islam.
KHALED }

OTHA — A warrior of the Koreish.

KADIJAH — Formerly a wealthy widow. Mohammed's first wife.

AYESHA — Mohammed's third wife and favorite.

ZEINAB — Another wife of Mohammed.

MIRIAM — A young Jewess.

MARGIANA — Slave of Kadijah.

GHOST OF WARAKA — A former friend of Mohammed.

TWO GENII, A FAIRY, AND MOHAMMED'S FATE.

THE MAN MOHAMMED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

(A moonlight night. Mohammed is seen slowly walking along the edge of a high precipice overlooking a rocky valley and the desert beyond.)

Moh.—It is enough! My wearied soul, resign!
Thou, furious tempest of my inward life,
Must here abate. What merits it to ponder
On the unsolved riddles of the universe
And weave despair into a wretched life,
By groping through the tangle of mind's range
To find a charm, as 't were, a talisman,
By which the creature of this whirling sphere
Of gloom and ignorance may force the gates
Of mystery and grasp a yielding ray
Of revelation? — In yon lonely cave
And on this rocky ridge that overlooks
The desert main — where through eternity
The sands like seas of human helplessness
Are hurled toward heaven and dashed in reckless heaps,

Grain buried under grain, till winds unknown
 As to their source renew the dreary game
 Of burial and ceaseless resurrection —
 Here in the sacred month of Ramadan
 I spent the night in undisturbed devotion ;
 Here many a cloudy day and storm-torn night
 I dwelt alone, with naught for my companion
 But solitude, the ever silent stars,
 And the torment and craving of my soul
 Outdrained by prayer ; till like a dizzy swoon
 It crept o'er me ; sky, earth, and substance all,
 Even my vital frame seemed like a mist
 To fade away, and in a dreadful void
 My soul, an unmembered sphere of consciousness,
 Seemed floating on ; when, with a sudden blaze
 The firmament returned in ruddy light,
 As that which bodes the dread Simoon's approach
 Over the desert ; and within this light,
 Which grew intenser, as I gazed, and filled
 All space, appeared such visions ravishing,
 Then echoed such enchanting voice thereout,
 That in its ecstasy my absent soul
 Regained control o'er my benumbed organs.
 I called aloud — and shuddered, when, I heard
 The echoes mock me. Earth resumed its matter,
 Grim darkness swallowed up the radiant scene,
 And only these bare rocks stood frowning at me.—
 Drunk with this over-measure of delight,
 I hastened to reveal it to my tribe ;
 But I was scoffed at, hailed a lunatic,
 The victim of some vile magician's spell,
 Until, stung deep with shame and disappointment,
 I've lost all trust in this brief revelation
 And in my mission and in Heaven itself,
 Which now no more reveals its signs to me.

All is a phantom. Like the light mirage,
 That hovers glorious o'er the desert calm
 But to elude the wanderer of the waste
 And fades away upon his near approach,
 So fades my hope, and in my sterile breast
 The weakened fountain beats against its walls
 And would be freed. Then take me, Universe,
 Back to thy all-creating womb! Thou desert,
 Slake thy hot thirst for one brief moment's time
 On my heart's blood! I yield to thee, O fate!

(Walks to the edge of precipice and draws his dagger to stab himself. There is a flash of light along the horizon. M. falls to the ground in a swoon. A genius and a fairy appear.)

G.—Lo! the man by Iblis hurled,
 Till deep mysteries be unfurled,
 Till to him such things unfold
 That no other shall behold.

F.—What a sound!

G.—Aye, what a light!

F.—Now the dark is doubly night,
 And the night-wind with its chills
 Creatures to the marrow thrills.

G.—Let us weave a magic cell
 Round the prophet in his spell,
 That no harm the night may rear
 And no mischief may draw near.

F.—See, the light of prophecy
 Looms above his closed eye.
 Well a man of heaven's election
 Merits our joint protection.

(They circle about M., waving their wands.)

F. & G.—Dust upraised by insects' tread,
 Fleeces from the silk-worm's thread,
 Pollen from the cactus-bloom,

Mist that paints the evening gloom,
Whirl and mingle in the air,
Spin a curtain fine and fair :
Thinner than the spider's bed,
Stronger than an iron plate
That no chilling wind shall shake,
Till our mighty spell shall break.

(A transparent vapor rises about Mohammed.)

Nothing now may nigh him wander,
While in dreamland he doth ponder
And his soul to vision bright
Takes its momentary flight. —
Now does life return anew.
Break, thou silken veil ! — Adieu !

(The mist is dispersed ; the G. and F. dart away, and M. arises.)

Moh.—Am I Mohammed, the son of Abdallah ? —
O revelation, whither hast thou flown ?
Abide with me ! — Abide !

(Enter from below Abu Taleb and Ali.)

Abu T.—Who is the man stands yonder on the rock ?
Thy eyes are young and keener than my own.

Ali.—It is Mohammed, if this dusky haze
Deceive me not.

Abu T.— Ah yes, indeed 't is he.
He sees us and descends.

(Moh. descends and approaches Abu T. and Ali.)

Moh.—Praise be to Allah, the Omnipotent,
Who hath created all the universe,
And unto whom all creatures must return ! —
O Abu Taleb, my beloved uncle,
Thou hast appeared at the most fitting time
To share with me a joy unspeakable.

Abu T.—What fortune now? Come, mete it out, dear nephew.

Moh.—Heaven unsealed to men ! This very hour
There was revealed to me what is for others
Reserved for time beyond the tomb. I entered
The precincts of eternal paradise.
And there did Gabriel commune with me
And write the holy law within my heart,
Which bids men break their idols and invoke
Him only, the Almighty and the Just,
The Self-sufficient, the eternal God ;
To practice meekness, chastity and justice
And spread his fame o'er all.

Abu T. Man, thou art mad !
 Thy vigils have o'erstrained thy nerves and painted
 Illusions in thy stray imagination.

Moh.—My uncle, speak not thus. E'en in this state :
My nerves distracted, the result of illness,
Watching and fasting, is the eternal power
Made manifest to me, for then it is
That oft for a brief space of time my soul
Abandons its weak clay and soars aloft,
And heaven's gates are opened to my view.
Mine is a stern commission from on high ;
Shall I be doubtful? Shall I hold my tongue?
Nay rather would I wander out tonight
Into the trackless desert, there commit
My unworthy limbs and vitals to be rent
By famished beasts of prey than to live silent
Another day, ignoring this high mandate
By the archangel himself to me delivered.
'T is not a new religion taught to me :
It is the creed of Abraham and Noah,
Which to the wandering sons of Ishmael
I'm called to preach ; and 't is my fondest wish

That thou, who wert the guardian of my youth,
Whose love was as a father's love toward me,
Shouldst be of those who do the will of Allah.

Abu T.—Forsooth, I ever loved thee, my Mohammed,
For ne'er I knew a child so meek and thoughtful
And ne'er a man more just and more sincere
Than thou hast proved thyself. Thou well dost merit
Esteem and honor from thy fellow men.
When the gods themselves appointed thee by lot
To mend the breach in the Caaba's wall,
Thy wisdom, sharing with the chiefs this honor,
Received the just applause of all the nation ;
Ne'er have I known thee prone to recklessness ;
Therefore I trust that what thou dost be right.
As for myself, I cannot in my age,
Abjure the faith in which my life was lived ;
But here is Ali, thy young cousin. Take him
To thy companionship. He loves and respects thee,
And thou dost plainly love him full as well.
And should a foe raise up a hand against thee,
I swear by Heaven, I'll stand by thee to death !

Ali.—And I shall follow thee, though 't be through hell !

Moh.—'T may be through hell ; but heaven lies beyond.

(*Exeunt.*—*Re-enter Genius and Fairy.*)

G.—Since we have vowed to be Mohammed's friends,
We'll aid him in attaining all his ends.
We'll sway weak minds to bow to his decree
And in the battle grant him victory.
We'll shield him from the hostile sorcerer's charm
And lend undaunted courage to his arm.

F.—And fill his house with Arabia's fairest maids !

G.—Come, let's retreat into our forest glades.

(*They disappear.*)

SCENE II.

(An apartment in Mohammed's house. Enter Amgrad and Margiana.)

Amg.—Good morrow, Margiana! Thou art stirring
Before the fowls. Has not Mohammed returned?

Marg.—No, Amgrad, and Kadijah, my poor mistress,
Is very anxious for him.

Amg.— Ah, I pity her
And blame her husband thus unduteously
To leave her all alone throughout the night
And seek the company of mountain-sprites.

Marg.—I'd ne'er be married to a night-rambler,
Unless he were as temperate, kind and wise
As Mohammed.

Amg.— I'm not a night-hawk, Margiana.

Marg.—Well, what of that?

Amg. I mean then marry me,
Since I'm the veritable opposite
Of such a man thou sayst thou wouldst not have.

Marg.—Thou art no night-hawk; nay, thou art far too
gentle!

I marvel thou disturbst this early hour,
When men would sleep and genii of the night
Still roam about and shun the eye of mortals.
But I would have thee prove, that, like Mohammed's,
Thy merits are kindness, temperance and wisdom;
For, knowing virtue and its pious excess,
I'd bar the latter nor dispense with the former.

Amg.—Thou 'dst have a prophet and a gentleman
Without the faults of either! By my sword!
Be thou my wife, and I swear that I shall prove
As precious an alloy as ever woman
Beheld in man!

Marg.— Sweet youth I would not barter
 With tutored promises without a warrant.—
 If thou wouldst ask Kadijah for my hand,
 I pray thee, ask her for her tiger-cub
 That mewls about her corridors of late,
 Which, while ye both are young and sportive, may
 Beguile your time, and when ye both grow old
 And churlish may devour you betimes,
 And thus I never be concerned with you !

Amg.—Well said ! but mark my word : When once thou
 callest
 So excellent a man as I thy husband,
 Thou wilt not bear the sight of any creature
 But Margiana in his company !
 Thou wilt be jealous as Mohammed himself —
 The most jealous man twixt Syria and the ocean —
 And envious fear will be thy sepulchre !

Marg.—Then, Amgrad, I propose thou be vindictive
 And ask me of thy mistress for thy wife !
 But thou must buy me, since I'm but a slave.

Amg.—With joy, though't take the whole of my
 possessions ;
 And thus I'll seal the contract. (Kissing *Marg.*)

Marg.—Hush, Hush ! anon my mistress will be here.
 I hear her footsteps. Doubtless she goes out
 To seek Mohammed. She would follow him
 To death, if't need be so, for, spite his faults,
 She loves her husband nigh to adoration.

Amg.—There's something in Mohammed's dreamy eyes
 And his majestic tenor, one would love
 And must admire, though a mystery.

Marg.—Thou 'rt right, Amgrad, I've often thought the
 same,
 But here Kadijah comes. (*Enter Kadijah*)

Kad.—Hear, Margiana, do thou guard the house

Till I return. I go to seek Mohammed.

Amg.—Pardon me, Madam, if I be so bold
To ask a favor.

Kad.—'T is poor time for favors;
Yet speak. Be brief, Amgrad, what wouldst thou have ?

Amg.—This maiden's hand in marriage, gracious Madam.

Kad.—A pert request ! I have a valued slave
In Margiana and would bear it hard
To part with her. Hast thou enough of means
To make the bride a rich and happy wife ?

Amg.—I am no prince, but I possess the means
To ransom her and robe her in costly silks,
Which love shall soon bedeck with India's jewels,
If fortune smiles upon our caravan
Now on the homeward journey from the East

Kad.—Well hast thou spoken, Amgrad ; but for you,
Speak, Margiana, wouldst thou be his wife ?

Marg.—I would, dear madam, for, besides being handsome,
He is most kind, and temperate and wise —
Though he confess it not !

Amg.— Thanks, Margiana !

Kad.—Then in due time thou shalt become his wife,
And that, which it had cost to ransom thee,
Shall be thy dowry for thy faithful service.
Thus need I not to rate thy personal worth,
Which claims, if measured by material value,
A price more than thy husband's wealth affords.

Marg.—My precious mistress, thou art all too good !

Amg.—Most excellent Kadijah !

Kad.— Hush ! No more !
While yet thou servst me, child, abide thy duty. (To
Marg.)

While I go seek Mohammed. (*Exit.*)

Amg.— A kind mistress
Is thine. If she can bear with her Mohammed

And still be of so sweet a disposition,
I think, Margiana, thou canst bear with me !

Marg.—Ay, do thou work by day and sleep by night,
Do not have fits and dream thou art a prophet,
And thou and I shall be the happiest pair
In all Arabia ! (*Exeunt.*)

(Enter Moh. and Kad.)

Kad.—Thy return relieves me of a grievous burden.

Moh.—These idle cares ! 'Twere time thou grew
accustomed

To leaving me at times alone with God.

Kad.—Son of Abdallah, my beloved husband !
Though wedded twice ere I became thy wife,
Neither of those my former husbands did
Abide with me with thy unswerving affection,
Nor could I love and honor them as thee.
More than a husband hast thou been to me :
Though much the older, often like a child
I look to thee as one would to her father,
So grave and settled does thy nature seem
Nor ever doffs its wonted dignity.
But e'en the more thy love doth fill my heart,
And e'en the more thy virtue I adore,
The more I wonder and the more I fear,
When oft I see thee, vanquished quite by thought,
Hurled into that most weird, unconscious state
Before my eyes and struggling with the void,
As though at war with spirits of the air ;
And utter words mysterious in purport ;
Then all at once cry out in ecstasy
And fall into a swoon that neareth death ;
To hear thee nightly moaning at my side
And praying : God have mercy on our race !
As though thou hadst the cares of all mankind

Weighed on thy conscience and wouldst heave them off ;
 To see thee rise from thy most needed rest
 And haste away into the ghostly night,
 Regardless of the chill that haunts the dark
 Or storm that makes the night thrice terrible.
 Oft trembling have I followed thee and scaled
 The rocks and mountain-sides and watched nigh thee,
 When thou didst pray and speak with the unseen ;
 But with all effort ever I have summoned
 To get as near thy mind as to thy heart,
 The mystery increases still and thou
 Eludest me with words most strange and hidden,—
 Now, by that love that welds us heart in heart,
 And by that confidence thou owest me
 Conjure I thee, reveal to me, my husband,
 Thy secrets, e'er this lone anxiety
 Become too much for nature's strength to bear,
 And I be driven mad !

Moh.— O my Kadijah !
 That I have caused thee grief does wound me sore.
 Thy sorrow e'er was mine though my afflictions
 Could but in part be thine. My social cares
 Thy calmer wisdom ever cured ; these visions,
 Most sacred mysteries, I but in part
 Could intimate to thee. Hadst thou been married
 To some less pensive nature than my own,
 Thou mightst have led a life of peace and quiet : —
 But manifold thy grief shall be requited :
 No more the consort thou of mere Mohammed,
 Thou art the wife of Allah's chosen prophet !
 This night I stood beneath the heavy skies
 Intent of self-destruction, for the weight
 Of fruitless thought and disappointed pride
 Quite vanquished me ; when, lo ! the sky around
 Blazed as a thousand suns, and from the zenith

Of all this glory came a far sounding voice
 And bade me, as I fell o'ercome with fear :
 Rise up Mohammed, thou art Allah's prophet !
 Reveal what we have written in thy heart ;
 Break down the wooden idols of thy race,
 And bid men worship God, and God alone.—
 Then heaven's curtain fell, and in the night
 I stood alone.

Kad.—But was this not a dream?

Moh.—Beloved Kadijah, thou the only star
 Of my love's firmament ! pause but one moment
 With me and bid thy thought wander afar
 O'er Syria, Hejaz, Yemen, Hadramaut,
 Egypt and Persia and the unmeasured plain
 Where dwells in tents the wandering Bedouin :
 All by our caravans oft-times surveyed ;
 Behold the tribes each chiefed by one strong man
 To guard 'gainst dissolution, yet observe
 How at small provocation they arise
 In arms, tribe extirpating tribe, till all
 This discord forms a spectacle that mocks
 At all that's consonant in the realm of thought.
 Then turn thy thought from this chaotic waste
 Wrought by man's greed and infidelity
 Into the depths of endless space above,
 Beyond the mists of earth, where calm, serene
 From year to year and age to age the sun
 The moon and stars sweep on harmonious
 As the light waves upon a mighty stream.—
 Must not this whirling universe, to move
 In concord, be the wisdom-governed realm
 Of one great power adverse to petty idols
 That usher feud into the ranks of men?
 Ah, I have seen the glory of his worship
 And heard a charge to me in voice of thunder :

I will not judge that this unnatural vision,
 The intense reflection of my reason's labor,
 Be but a vagrant sally of the fancy,
 And thus conclude with thee and say: 'T is a dream;
 Nay, sober judgment gives me faithful proof
 'T is heaven's voice, which laid on me the task
 Toward which since youth I've felt my life converging.
 Has not thy learned cousin, Waraka,
 Foretold my mission? Dost thou doubt his word?
 The ignorance of these Arabians,
 The idol-cult of this grim race of outlaws
 Makes me the prophet of the God of Laws!
 The vision was a message of the truth,
 And truth is not a dream.

Kad.— O wise Mohammed!
 Thou never gav'st me cause to doubt thy word;
 Nor will I doubt it now. I do believe
 That thou art Allah's prophet!

Moh.— Allah bless thee!
 The mother of the Faithful thou art hailed
 Hereafter. Praised be Allah, who hath given
 Me such a wife!

Kad. Mohammed, thou art weary.
 The strain of this uneasy night hath injured
 Thy natural strength. Come, let us both retire;
 I have not slept this night, my anxious thoughts
 Wandering with thee.

Moh.— Thou speakst with sober wisdom,
 And I comply, that I may gain the strength
 To stand before the chiefs of the Koreish
 And speak my message.

(*Exeunt.*)



ACT II.

SCENE I.

(A market place in Mecca. Merchant and slaves, Zinchi, Habib and Badoura, busied about.)

Merch.—Zinchi and Habib! hear ye, indolent knaves!
Bear me these bales down to the tailor's shop.
Badoura, thou go keep an eye on them,
Lest they go halting on each stepping-stone
To flirt with the shop-maids, or lest they should steal
A costly ribbon or ought else of value.

Zin.—We'll be most speedy and faithful. (*aside*) I
say Badoura,
Our master is most kind to send thee along,
Thou art the most clever filcher of us three.

Hab.—And what we poach thou canst at once conceal.

Zin.—Aye we will give thee half of what we steal.

Bad.—Tush! let it be a bargain 'twixt us three.
What would men have of slaves but thievery?
(*Exeunt slaves.*)

(Enter two camel-drivers.)

Merch.—Good day to you, my sailors of the sand!
Ye look quite weary. Doubtless ye have borne
A hard week's work.

1st C. D.—Aye, I declare we have.
By all the evil Jinns! a terrific blast
We faced, when, breaking camp in the nearest wadi,
We drove our camels toward the final stage.
I would have sworn that hell had broke her chains

And rode the snorting, terror-hoofed tempest
 Of the Arabian wilds : so fierce and hot
 The mad Simoon breathed whirlwinds from his jaws,
 As he would wither vitals, flesh and bone
 And hurl our cavalcade into the sea.

Merch.—By Iblis ! A parade of sun-cured Arabs :
 A royal banquet for Leviathan !

2nd C.D.—Indeed, sir.—Thou remindst me of the story
 I've often heard our Jewish cousins tell
 Of the adventure of their prophet Jonah
 With the finned monster haunting ocean's depths.—
 Ah ! as for me, give me the blazing plains
 With all their perils of element, man and brute,
 And I will brave them with a fearless front ;
 But save me from the adventures of the sea !
 For to sojourn in the entrails of a whale
 Were no ordeal adapted to my fancy,
 Since I do sorely lack prophetic fire
 To make the brute disgorge ! Then help me Jonah !

Merch.—The experiment were a fit one to apply
 To our Mohammed, and thus test his mettle.

2nd C.D.—Who is Mohammed ?

1st C.D.— Formerly a camel-driver
 Like thee and me, (I well remember him
 From my earliest trips on which I served with him)
 He's now become—

Merch.— A mule-driver, in sooth !
 Who'd gag us thoroughbred Arabian steeds
 With bridles of a curious mongrel creed
 Concocted from the morsels he hath stolen
 From Christian, Jew and Gentile. By the gods !
 He is a prodigy as many an age
 Hath not brought forth in western Asia.—
 He is withal, a moralist by nature :
 Gambling and wine he'd have abominations

And proclaims, to bury infant girls at birth,
 As is our ancient privilege, and as
 Our policy prescribes, is barbarous murder.

1st C.D.—He'd have us raise a nation of Amazons!
 Or useless baggage for our expeditions.

2nd C.C.—The fool! It had been best for him indeed,
 Had he been buried when a suckling brat.

1st C.D.—A fig for his precepts! in defiance whereof
 Let's have some wine! Ho, drowsy slave, some wine!
 Wine from Damascus! Heed, thou bring no other.—
 We'll steep our flesh in the nectar of the gods,
 Then challenge the Simoon to wither us
 Or Mohammed's creed to act the antidote
 Of the inspiring blood of Lebanon.

Merch.—Yet wine hath been the source of many ills.
 In the version of one jolly Hebrew peddler,
 'T was the immediate cause of the great deluge.

2nd C.D.—Another seer! let us have his tale.

Merch.—Saith he: In the auric age before the flood,
 The Red Sea was a monstrous bowl of wine
 Filled daily from an aqueduct from Eden,
 Which a great Jin, hot from the desert breeze,
 Drained at a draught, when both his heart and brain,
 Though thousands leagues apart, in the same twinkling
 Rebelled, and with a groan the greedy monster
 Rolled from Abyssinia into the Indian Ocean,
 Which thereby rose and flooded all the earth.

1st C.D.—A monstrous fib!

Merch.— Yet quite a sober fable
 Compared with those this man Mohammed tells
 In the record of his hybrid creed, the Koran.

(Enter Slave with wine.)

Slave—Master, your wine.

1st C.D.— 'T is the Damascan brand!

Damascus, thy wine is like thy two-edged swords,
Keen in the flesh and never fails to touch
The heart of man. Your health! drink hearty, friends.

Merch.—This potion to the genius of the Prophet!

2nd C.D.—Gambling he'd have a vice! then it were meet,
We celebrate him in a merry fling,
And challenge fortune in a game of hazard!

1st C.D.—Here are the arrows. Will you join us, sir?

Merch.—Play, gentlemen, I must see to my effects.

(They draw arrows from their quivers and begin to cast lots with them.)

In this respect I am a Mussulman. (*Aside*)
The training that Mohammed hath acquired
In managing Kadijah's caravans
Hath stood him well in stead and oped his eyes
To the villainy of chance and the true merits
Of industry, fair play, and clever wit.

(Enter Zinchi, Habib and Badoura at rear.)

Zin.—Ten thousand plugs to stop these gabbling mouths
That munch the air of every street of Mecca
With dissertations on that damned prophet!

Bad.—What's he to thee?

Zin.— I cannot brook the ape.
Hang him, I say, upon the tallest date,
The huff, who with a tale of heaven and hell
Would save mankind, yet (hang the hypocrit!)
Keeps slaves and deals in human flesh. I say
A scamp that preaches heaven and makes earth hell
For half mankind nor frees the fettered slaves,
While he assumes the power to reform,
Deserves to die as other villains die.

Hab.—Aye, that his soul may, coming back to earth,
Enter a slave and learn to pine for freedom.

Bad.—Let him in peace. Though he will not release us,
He will not harm us. Let him dupe our lords.—
Come, go along, our master sees us tarry.

Merch.—Badoura, honest wench, thou art back soon!
Didst keep the waggish scamps well out of mischief?

Bad.—Yes, not a thread they stole (*aside*) without my
knowledge!

Zin.—And, thanks to us, though hast a heap of that!
(*aside*)

Merch.—Well done, my child. Now Zinchi, Habib,
lively!

Clear up this shop and bear these parcels home.

Badoura, see they do their proper duty.

Bad.—Leave them to me, my lord, and all is well—
Since I've more wit than they, fraud to conceal! (*Aside*)

Zin.—Come, lend thy hand, we'll bear these wares away.

Hab.—And spite the lash we'll steal without delay.

Bad.—And share in the equity of honest thieves,
Since mischief aliens, not its own, deceives;
And gull these men who spurn the vulgar slave,
Invite the devil and would beguile the knave. (*Exeunt.*)

1st C.D.—Some hellish genius is aiding thee:
I lose whate'er I play. All my possessions
Are squandered. (*To slave.*) Here, pour in more wine for
me.

Here goes my fortune. (*Empties cup at a draught.*)

2nd C.D.— Thou mayst yet redeem it.

1st C.D.—How, black-leg?

Merch.— There's no vormal for folly!

2nd C.D.—Thou hast yet a wife.

1st C.D.— Ah, yes! my wife, my wife!

It is unsafe for me to have a wife,
Who roves as I one half the year abroad,
Since some disgrace might come upon his name,
While he is unaware. Be it so: my wife

Against thy favorite mare.

2nd C.D.— I'll take the chances,
Though I should grieve to lose my mare.

Merch.— Ho, ho !
Thy last ! and thou a beggared widower !—
But I've employment for thee, will provide thee
Within a year with substance quite sufficient
To buy another wife and be in state
To lose another household in the game !

Here is my hand. Fie, fie ! cheer up, good fellow !

1st C.D.—Thou art most kind, and I accept with thanks.

2nd C.D.—First see, thou give me up thy wife and
goods.

1st C.D.—My goods are thine,—yet let me keep my wife.
Ah !—'t was the wine that made the fool of me ;
Now I am sober, let me have her back,
Since she is dear to me and loves thee not.

2nd C.D.—What matters that ? She's mine by law. I'll
have her.
What though she hate ? She is my slave.

1st C.D.— Thou monster ;
Of cunning claw and unrelenting heart,
I'll have thy life ! Here's bloody retribution !

(*Draws his saber.*)

Merch.—Thrust back thy saber, prodigal ! Thou by law
Hast lost thy competence ; therefore resign.
The game was witnessed. Yield and follow me.

1st C. D.—Then take my goods, thou wizzard ! take my
wife !

Though thou hadst justly paid them with thy life.
That man Mohammed merits little blame
In that he damns the wine and loathes the game.

(*Exit with Merchant.*)

2nd C. D.—Had I thus lost my fortune in the game,
My luckless fellow, I had said the same ! (*Exit.*)

(Enter chiefs of the Koreish : Abu Sofian, Abu Taleb, Hamza, Abu Jahl, Omar, Amru, and others.)

Abu Sof.—Are we all assembled?

Omar.—I think there is none missing of the men
Invited here to congregate with us.

Abu Sof.—Then to our purpose. It being our sacred duty
Toward our own tribe, the Koreish, and toward all
Our near allies to protect our interests
And to defend the worship of the gods
Which to this day have granted us to prosper,
We must, of sheer necessity, at once
Put stop to these mad teachings of Mohammed,
Who daily makes new proselites to Islam
And threatens our religion, and our income
From the uncounted pilgrims bringing riches
Beneath the sacred vesture of devotion,
To fill our coffers. Now, my valiant friends,
Give your opinion as to how we may
With expedition check the harmful course
Of this fanatic : whether 't be by bribe,
By reason or by violence. Let each
Propose some means that may defeat the movement.

Hamza.—Methinks, my brother, that this crazed Mohammed,

My nephew, is much like that foolish bird,
The ostrich, which, men say, was once a creature
Stronger in flight than the most powerful eagle,
Until in its unbounded pride it boasted
To rise into the region of the sun,
And, when it near approached the glowing sphere,
Had its great wings scorched to the puny stumps
That now it bears, its brain boiled down to stupor,
And like a star was hurled upon the earth,
No more to fly but trot on awkward legs
And with its stupid head thrust in a bush,

Fall easy prey to men. Thus this bold mind
 Full of proud plans and vain imagination
 That feigns to pierce the heavens in its flight
 Must have its wings pared on the edge of reason,
 Its pride scorched in the flames of ridicule,
 Till it be cured from these insane phantasms
 And hide its head for shame in its own folly.

Abu Jahl.—Hamza, thou art astray in thy opinion,
 Thou knowest not thy nephew, as I know him.
 He's not the man to be refuted lightly,
 Nor will he flinch from scorn and ridicule.
 He is tenacious as a cancer in the flesh,
 Besides he has that grace about his person
 That wins all classes to confide in him.
 My caution is: the only safe Mohammed
 Is not Mohammed, but Mohammed's corpse!

Abu Tal.—Be not so rash and cruel, Abu Jahl,
 For know that being uncle to Mohammed,
 And having brought him up an orphan child —
 Though not a follower of his new doctrine —
 I've taken oath to stand by him till death,
 If violence be offered him. Who dares
 Raise up a murderous hand against Mohammed,
 He dies or I, by Heaven! Thus I've sworn.

Abu Sof.—Thou, Abu Taleb, having sacred charge
 Of the Caäba and being at the head
 Of the proud house of Hashem, e'er espoucest
 That which detracts from our grave interests.
 We'll bear no longer with thy arrogance;
 We're not thy serfs, we are thy peers in rank;
 And in our conduct toward this lunatic
 We'll have our way.

Abu Tal. Perchance a perilous way.

(Enter Moh.)

But here's himself of whom ye stand in fear.

Let him plead his own cause.

Amru.— Sons of the desert,
Behold the grandson of Abd al Mutalleb,
Who boasts to know what goeth on in heaven !

Moh.—Which blasphemy shall nevermore inherit
Or near approach.

Amru.— For, my dear sirs, you see
Mohammed at command holds heaven's keys,
And will not open but to whom he please !

Omar.—Be silent wanton boy, and let him speak.

Moh.—Jests are not reason ; ridicule is lie
And casts but gay deception o'er the truth ;
'Tis treachery wherewith a flighty mind
With false impression wars 'gainst honest judgment ;
It is the strongest argument of fools,—
And I would trust my kinsmen are not fools.—
My noble friends, when in the distant ages
God made the genii of smokeless fire,
He sent to them, in time, inspired prophets,
Who, on command, revealed his will to them ;
But they, refusing to obey, were scattered
By angel hosts created of pure light,
To hide in caves and in the depths of seas.
Then out of water God created beasts,
And out of clay He moulded mortal men
And sent them prophets : Noah, Abraham,
And Solomon and others ; but their words
Were slighted, and their people went astray ;
And God destroyed their kingdoms in his wrath.
But now to you, ye sons of Ishmael,
You, whose vile laws proclaim idolatry
And justify most cruel infanticide,
Protect not innocence and chastity ;
To you, who've wandered farthest from the Being
Whom your forefathers worshipped through the spirits

They thought inhabited each nightly star ;
 To you, who worship wood and stone and mud,
 Is sent the word of Allah, who revealed
 His will to me in awful revelation.

Bethink yourselves of the banished genii
 Who, like to shooting stars, are nightly driven
 From heaven's gate. Bethink you of the Jews
 Who wander exiles o'er the foreign world,
 Because their ears were deafened to their prophets.
 Resign to Allah, the one living Allah,
 From whom all is, to whom all things return.

Amru.—If Solomon or Moses be in thee,
 Let them do miracles, that we may see !

Omar.—Thou speak'st well, Amru, for so dainty a plant
 Sown in the wilds and nurtured in a hot-bed ! —
 Let us have miracles, and we believe. (To Moh.)

Hamza.—Let's see the angels bring thy Coran down !

Abu Jahl.—Let fountains spring in the Arabian desert,
 And change it to a plain of milk and honey !

Abu Sof.—Raise up the dead, and heal the deaf and
 blind !

Ascend before us by a ladder to heaven,
 And prove us what thou wouldst impose upon us !

Moh.—My mission here is but the plain appeal
 To reason and to faith. Would ye be sharers
 Of that which overtook proud Pharaoh,
 When he was forced to learn through miracles?
 Or of the punishment of Israel,

When they cried, miracles ! and spurned at faith ?

Amru.—How slyly does the fox evade the trap !

Abu Jahl.—Since miracles thou art inapt to do,
 Thou dost invent these pretexts quite convenient.

Moh.—I'll not refute that which thou canst not prove,
 And which the devil gave thy heart to say ;
 But I will speak as Allah bids me speak :

To him who will accept the laws of Islam,
 Love justice, kindness, live in chastity,
 There shall, in after life, be rapturous gardens,
 Wherein flow rivers arched with verdant shade;
 There they shall live in endless mirth and love,
 And couch with beauteous and faithful wives;—

Amru.—Give us credentials to thy heavenly brides
(interrupting),
 And in thy name we'll all become suicides!

Moh.—But for the unbelievers hell's hot bowels *(turning to Amru)*

With torment groan through all eternity!

Hamza.—A glorious heaven indeed thou hast created!

Omar.—Give us Solomon's seal-ring that may take us
 thither!

Amru.—Or send an angel up to bring it hither!

Abu Jahl.—Thou art a fool, an idle babbler!

Abu Sof.—A traitor to thy tribe and to thy nation!

Abu Jahl.—We'll teach thee preach hell's torment to thy
 brothers.

We'll send thee to the pit in our advance,

To gather fagot-wood for our reception!

Abu Sof.—Despatch him! To Jehenna's flames with
 him!

Abu Jahl.—Stab him!

Abu Tal.—

Back! back, ye vipers!

Hamza.—

Peace, my friends.

Omar.—Give him a chance. Perhaps he will repent.

Moh.—Thou, Omar, shalt repent, ere long.

Omar.

Ho, ho!

I'd be converted by an all-day-dreamer!

Abu Sof.—Come, men, away. Here open violence
 Must stir a mob against us. Thou, false prophet,
 And thou, his hated champion, Abu Taleb,
 Thou fosterer of this wild depravity,

Since death alone can settle our dispute,
 I'll never rest me, till I have your blood !
 I swear that, ere this strife shall be abated,
 Thy name or mine shall be exterminated.

(Exeunt all but Abu Taleb and Mohammed.)

Abu Tal.—Thou seest what thy ambition brings upon me :
 The hatred of the strongest men of Mecca ;
 And open war must be the fatal end,
 If I resign not this my guardianship
 And save the city streams of valiant blood
 And tears of women moaning for their husbands
 By their own kinsmen slain.

Moh. Have faith, my uncle !
 Were on my right the sun and on my left
 The moon arrayed to crush me with their mass,
 I should not flinch, nor turn from this my mission.
 But wouldst thou leave me, uncle,—fare thee well !

Abu Tal.—Be not cast down, Mohammed. Abu Taleb
 Would rather die than leave thee desolate.
 Preach thou whatever doctrine thou doest choose,
 Though thou unchain Death's kingdom, and his Furies
 Aim their destruction at my old gray head,
 Still with my brave dependents I'll protect thee.
 Return in confidence. Before the night
 I'll meet thee at thy house and counsel with thee.

(Exit Abu Taleb. Enter messenger of the Koreishites. He salutes Mohammed, who regards him in silence and waits for him to speak.)

Mess.—Son of my friend Abdallah, I am sent
 To make a last attempt to lead thee aright.
 Thou art of noble birth, and yet thou stirrest
 Sedition in the land, divid'st our families,
 Throw'st infamy upon our gods, and taxest
 Our reverend fathers with impiety.

Now listen to the offer we shall make,
That thou desist from this thy mutinous conduct.

Moh.—Speak thy intent. — I listen.

Mess.—Son of my friend, what purpose holds thy mind,
What great ambition, that thou gatherest round thee
The idle masses? Is it greed for wealth?

If so, we offer here to make thee richer
Than any other of the tribe of Koreish;
If it be honor, thou shalt be our lord,
And all we plan shall be through thy advice;
Or if it be some evil genius,
That with its charms controls thy reckless actions,
We'll bring thee the most skilled of all physicians
And spend our precious gold to have thee cured.

Moh.—What more hast thou to tell me?

Mess. That is all.

Moh.—Then listen to me. Turn back, and on thy knees
Implore thou Allah's pardon for this crime,
That thou didst tempt his servant with vain gifts
And dare attribute to an evil Jinn
His doctrine! Bid those men that sent thee here
Do penance for thy shameful delegation!
I've spoken. — Thou hast heard.— Now choose thy answer.

Mess.—In the name of all the princes of our tribe,
Thou art declared an outlaw in the city;
And in thy stubborn purpose thou shalt perish! (*Exit Mess.*)

Moh.—If so Allah will. (*Exit.*)

(Enter Behram and Assad.)

Assad. — Well, Behram, did'st increase thy stately
fortune
By thy last trip to Tye?

Behram.— Aye, but at hazard
Of losing all. Thou knowest as well as I,
How we, the traffickers of the wild desert,

Are sons of Chance. We, who, while others sit
 Mid gay companions in palm-shaded cities,
 Feasting on love and figs and tamarinds
 And drinking healths with wine and camels-milk,—
 Face the hot winds and bandits of the waste
 In carrying gold, myrrh, and frankincense,
 The precious stones from Saba and from Ophir
 To trade them for the purple robes of Tyre
 And the unmatched steel sabres of Damascus,
 For our state's maintenance. My latest journey,
 As you're informed, was from Arabia the Happy,
 Through Palestine, to Tyre: The very course
 That Balkis, Saba's queen, pursued of yore,
 To hear the wisdom of great Solomon.
 At the rich seaport of the old Phoenecians
 I soon disposed of all to good advantage;
 But, we scarce reaching the first stage, a band
 Of desert pirates on swift-sailing steeds
 Fell on us, killed and scattered, and in haste
 Rode off, o'erladen with their precious spoil.

Assad.—A loss indeed! How couldst thou ever mend it?

Behram.—In less than forty hours all was redeemed:
 I gathered straightway my surviving force,
 And we with speed rode back to Tyre, there summoned
 An hundred horsemen, promising great spoil.
 Like hungry hounds we traced the fresh-beat trail
 And overthrew the robbers in their den,
 There, taking back our goods with interest,
 We paid our aids with what the place concealed
 Of former plunder.

Assad.— Well and bravely done!
 Could I thus serve the tempest in return,
 Which buried me in sand an hundred camels:
 One fifth my herd, and snatch its booty back,
 I'd hire wind-bags and go fight the storm!

Behram.—Unlucky stars! One hundred at a stroke?

Assad.—Yet fortune favored me in another way:

My herds being fruitful, I have even to-day
More camels than before the accident,
Which happened but three months ago.—How's that!

Behram.—Ah, what a scamp is luck!

Assad.— And what a fool

Mohammed, who'd have luck the slave of Allah,
Who foreordains our destinies.

Behram.— Mohammed?—

O yes! now I remember. He's the man
Has a novel doctrine, Islam, on the brain!
Who, as the fable goes, when first he saw
The light of day—his mother being spared
The suffering of travail—spoke strange words;
Upon whose birth the earth and heaven shook,
Rivers and lakes sprang back into their springs
In awe, or burst in rapture o'er their banks;
The royal palace of the Persian monarch
Trembled and cracked, and an old sage declared
He saw in dream a young Arabian charger
Kick out a great ferocious camel's brain
With skilled appliance of his hinder heels;
The sacred fires of wise Zoroaster,
Which, since the day he brought the flame from heaven,
Had burned unceasing thousand years and more,
Went out: all idols fell upon their noses,
And evil jinns were hurled into the sea.—
What fiction will not childish minds invent,
When some wild demagogue hath set them spinning!—
How does he prosper, this sweet child of folly?

Assad.—The Meccan chiefs, with few exceptions, all
Have now determined that the fool shall die;
For daily his apostles grow in number,
And, if no check be put on this winged monster

By cutting off its head, religious war
Shall soon destroy our fortunes and our commerce.

Behram.—Ah! is it come thus far? Then 'tis high time
That we were lending aid; come let us seek
The leaders of the Koreish.

Hassan.— I am with thee.
This new religion, like a desert stream,
Shall soon dry up in sand. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

(Apartment in Mohammed's house. Enter Moh. in torn garments and with disheveled hair.)

Moh.—Strange light of day, a long and tearful night
Veiled to my eyes! again thy ominous rays
Bring to my sight gay nature's outward forms.
Ere this, as through transparent glaciers, frozen
In cold and dogged patience, thou didst greet me;
But now affection's deepest pain hath melted
The crystal gates, and the imprisoned anguish
Of years hath burst through these thy arid portals,
Dispensing to my heart both light and gloom,
Soothing old woes and shrouding them in new.
The weight of struggling cares hath flown a moment,
But left a death-like void, which dawning light
Now fills with paleness and a ghostly nimbus,
As that which hangs about grim Hades' halls.—
My more than father, Abu Taleb, is dead!
He whose right hand was as a shield to me,
Shunned by my foes, now vanquished by disease.
My only dreaded champion,—he is gone!
And she — O Allah! what a mortal blow!
She, my companion, my most faithful consort,
My love, my solace, ay, my all in all

On earth, my dear Kadijah, is no more.—
 The mother of the Faithful is no more;
 And with her flies that hope and dauntless courage
 Which she seemed sent by Heaven to support.
 My enemies surround me on all sides,
 And would devour me and my small band;
 My fortune their vindictive greed hath blasted,
 My family they've crushed with degradation,
 I have been hunted like a forest stag
 From haunt to haunt. I have been splashed with mud
 While in devotion at the Caaba's shrine,
 Beaten with stones, half strangled, spit upon,
 Abused with barbed lampoons and vilest taunts,
 Branded with all inventions of disgrace;
 And now a thousand dagger-points are aimed
 Against my smarting breast. Allah deserts me,
 His worthless servant!

(Enter Abu Beker.)

Noble Abu Beker,
 Most faithful of the faithful, why so speedy?
 What is the news?
Abu Beker.— Make haste, O prophet of Allah!
 A fell conspiracy is leagued against thee.
 From every house of Koreish one young warrior
 (Thus they divide the crime among themselves.)
 Hath sworn to plunge his poniard in thy heart!
 E'er since at midnight, on the solemn hills
 Medina's chiefs swore thee a dreadful oath
 To stand thee guard against thy threatening foes
 And give thee shelter in their friendly city,
 I've daily urged thy flight, but all in vain.
 Now lies decision but twixt life and death.
 I have swift dromedaries all equipped
 To bear us to Medina. Come away!

Ere thou fall victim to the cimeters
Of the conspirators.

Moh.— I am indifferent.

Kadijah gone, hope, faith, and courage seem
To leave me. Yet I am but Allah's servant
And dare not madly here expose my life.

Abu Beker.—If thou dost want a wife to comfort thee,
I offer thee my virgin child Ayesha,
Whom from her infancy thou hast admired,
Who, formed in beauty famed throughout the land,
Is modest and devotionally loves thee.

Moh.—Thy offering pleases me — but let us now
Prepare for flight. Go hasten thou to Ali
And call him hither, then prepare conveyance.
I shall be with thee soon.

Abu Beker.— I shall be ready.

Meanwhile see to thy safety. (*Exit.*)

Moh.—This, in the ungrateful course of all the world,
Is the reward of him who would reform !
Men smile and bow and fawn upon the hand
That throws them alms and stuffs their wanton bellies ;
But he who'd lay a bridle on men's passion,
Tax their dull thought, and offer them reward
But through the medium of sacrifice,
However glorious be the benefit,
Is spurned away ; for men have much in common
With hungry curs. They snap at morsels thrown them
And leave the fruits of life upon the tree
Out of their taste and reach. Woe, woe to him
Who would tear up that which hath rooted deep
Within the hearts of men and with the years
Become thus much a piece of them that parting
Seems murder to the soul ! Woe, woe to him
Who would break down the walls of ancient dogma,
However weak and rotten they may be,

And build upon the ruins a new faith
 Howe'er much better ! His the obstinate task
 To dull a myriad swords, ere he may trust
 His breast unshielded to the stubborn world.
 How I, who have attempted all in vain,
 Shall blunt the thorns of wild Arabia,
 Defies my wit. — And yet it dawns upon me :
 We must cross arms for empire !

(Enter Ali.)

Welcome, Ali !

That we must flee thou heardst from Abu Beker.
 Now bear in mind what confidence I ever
 Have had in thy integrity and wisdom.
 Remember how in public I declared
 Thee my brave vicar. Now thou hast occasion
 To prove thy valor and to justify
 The trust placed in thee. Here is my green cloak,
 Which I am wont to wear. Now wrap thyself
 Into its folds and lie as though to sleep
 Upon my bed ; and when the murderers come
 To plunge their swords into Mohammed's heart,
 Rise up as in surprise ; and when they ask
 Where is Mohammed, tell them he is out,
 To take a stroll, and bear thyself as calm
 As if not e'en the smallest intimation
 Of their intent had reached me. This will help
 Myself with Abu Beker to attain
 A place of safety, ere we are pursued.
Ali.—Trust all to me. The men shall be outwitted.
 If I play not an expert Will-o-the-wisp,
 I'll forfeit every claim to thy esteem.

Moh.—Then aid me to ascend. I shall escape
 Through the dark lane. (*With Ali's assistance M. climbs to
 a back window.*) Now, Ali, be a man !
 And when your time comes, with the faithful ones

Flee to Medina. (*Moh. disappears.*)

Ali. Allah guard his prophet !
Now to my task. It is indeed an honor
To wear the Prophet's mantle ! Come, dear Ali !
Lie down to sleep. Sleep as Mohammed sleeps :
Angels about and thy mind's eye wide open.

(There is a loud knock at the door.)

Allah il Allah ! We are just in time !
I must not answer, lest the scoundrels think
The prophet loses sleep on their account,
Which were not doing credit to his fame.

(Another violent knock.)

The trump of Gabriel hath not yet sounded,
Nor does the question of the world's salvation
At present rob me of my sweet repose.

(The door is forced open and the conspirators, Assad at their head, rush in, holding daggers beneath their cloaks, which they are about to discover, when they recognize Ali.)

Ali.—Salam alaikum !

Assad. Ah ! — Ali ! Where's Mohammed ?

Ali.—Ye are not wont to ask with such concern.
He hath strolled forth to breathe the evening air,
To pray for you ! and to revive his health.

Assad.—His health indeed ! His prayers are unsolicited.
Where shall we find him ?

Ali. Why, on his camel's back !

Another Conspirator.—Jest not with us. Where can the
man be found ?

Ali.—What time is't ?

Consp. A little before the midnight hour.

Ali.—Halt in the next oasis past the moon ;
There ye will meet him on his humped beast,
On an excursion to the seventh heaven.

Give him my greeting.

Assad. Thou art a maniac :
The proper vicar of the arch-impostor.

Ali.—And thou the devil's proxy. Hence ! Begone !
Or I'll alarm the entire populace
Of Mecca. (*Exeunt conspirators.*)

Happy journey to the stars ! —
Now I will hold all corners of the town !
And post me spies on every road and path,
And wheresoe'er I may mislead the assassins,
I'll put their noses on a wild-goose trail ;
Then with all speed I'll gather our allies
And in Medina we will meet again. —
What innocence in these ferocious sheep,
To think they'd catch Mohammed in his sleep ! (*Exit.*)



ACT III.

SCENE I.

(A solitary place near Medina. Enter Mohammed.)

Moh.—Now hath at length the quarry found retreat,
To gasp for breath. Medina threw wide her gates,
And like a victor I was welcomed in.
A mosque is built, to which with mine own hands
I carried stones and mortar; and the Faithful
Now worship unmolested. But this calm
Pends but between two tempests. Jews and Meccans
With the wild Bedouins are laying plots,
How they may have my head to bear as trophy
Of the return of lewd idolatry.—
O ye wild beasts! Ye ravenous Meccan vultures!
Ye whores! Ye thieves! Ye cruel infanticides!
Ye skulking murderers! Ye greedy robbers!
What is there short of death—ay, more than death,
I suffered not beneath your savage talons?
In meekness and forbearance I received
The hell-forged missiles from your vicious hands,
Till ye have pressed me to my nature's limits,
Where it were shameful to prolong forbearance.
When ye have struck me, who would soothe your wounds,
I bore it for your sake, but to receive
From marble hearts redoubled violence;
Till it inflames my conscience to the quick.—
What justice is in meekness, O just God?

Is not retaliation nature's law?
 Should thus the honest suffer? Never! Never!
 Retaliation! pleads this broken heart.—
 Did not great Moses teach retaliation?
 'T was eye for eye and tooth for tooth; and I
 Shall teach revenge! yea, revel in revenge,
 Till I am lord! Did not the prophets order
 The sons of Israel spare not a man
 Of the idolators? Shall I teach different
 The sons of Ishmael? At my command
 Are men well skilled in arms and brave in war;
 Why not use force, when argument hath failed?
 The glorious end must justify such means.
 It is my last resort! The sword! the sword!
 The sword, the key to heaven and to hell!
 'T is Allah's will, for 't is man's benefit.

(Enter Hamza and Omar.)

Hail, hail, my uncle Hamza! Hail, strong Omar!
 Whom God hath rooted from the wilderness,
 And made strong bulwarks of the Moslem hosts.
 Lions of Islam! I have welcome tidings.
 Here's prey for lions! It is Heaven's decree
 That we should purge the nations with the sword.
 All prophets of the word have been rejected:
 The last shall win the heathen with the sword!

Hamza.—Allah be praised! We are his willing servants.

Omar.—We've long been love-sick for the clang of arms.
 We're not accustomed to this life of peace
 We're forced to lead, since we espoused thy cause,
 And to being taunted by our foes as cowards
 Afraid to strike a blow, afraid of death.
 Now thou hast slacked the rein of our hearts' passion,
 I swear to fight for Islam and its prophet
 To the last drop of blood!

Hamza.— Thy vow is spoken
For me as well, my arm shall never rest,
Till Islam triumph or my heart be still.

(Enter Abu Beker and Ali.)

Abu Beker.—I hear you speak of arms. If that's the cry,
Here is a fearless blade!

Ali.— And here another!

Moh.—Mighty is Allah, who hath such as you
At his command! Now let us here confirm
Our vows. Give me your hands!—For faith we fight!
Through faith even now the victory is ours!—
Now call ye our chief men into a meeting
This night. We must prepare some force anon
To fall upon the Meccan caravans.
Employ great haste, that all may be at hand.

Abu B.—Come, men, to arms! This war knows no
delay.

(Exeunt Abu Beker, Omar, Hamza, and Ali.)

Moh.—Mission of peace, now hast thou seen thine end!
Revenge and war, ye are my element!
Run wild, ye dogs of strife! Ye streams of blood!
Purge earth and sea and hades in your flood!—
Ah! these four chiefs outweigh ten thousand men!
And Islam's cause is safe.—Who is 't approaches?
Ayesha, thou?

(Ayesha enters and unveils herself.)

Ay.— 'T is I, my saintly husband.

Moh.—Why must thou ever follow me, my child?

Ay.—Why dost thou ever go abroad, my lord?
I love too well, to be content alone,
Therefore I seek thy company. O prophet!
How canst thou love the daughter of Abu Beker
Above a humor, while thus I am banished

Thy company and in thy contemplations,
Thy sympathy?

Moh.— My youthful wife, Ayesha,
Kadijah was advanced in years and wisdom,
And yet the burden of a prophet's troubles
Bowed her strong nature to an untimely grave.
Thou shalt not mar thy youthful mirth with cares.

Ay.—Thou ever speakst as though Kadijah were
A queen and I a pawn. Was she not stricken
In age? Have you not now a better wife?

Moh.—Ah! ne'er the peer to her this world could give!
When I was poor she shared her wealth with me;
When friend and foe belied me, she believed me;
When all denounced, she, dear, alone was faithful.
I'll not forget it; though I love thee now
Above all others. But be thou content
With youthful dreams, and seek not aged cares.

Ay.—When, on our nuptial day, I came to thee,
To live with thee in poverty, and share
A couch of sheepskin with a banished prophet,
Was it enjoyment that I sought with thee?
Did I not vow to share thy persecution?
Why, then, should mine not be the privilege
To share the burden of thy cares, since I
Have doffed my youth to be a prophet's bride?
I will not rest, I will not be consoled,
Till thou dost show me that same confidence
Kadijah once enjoyed.

Moh.— My sweet subduer!
Most stern reserve must e'er yield up its claims
Before the charm of beauty's inquisition.
Allah hath gifted thee with thoughtfulness
Beyond thy years. Since thou art thus desirous
To see into the dungeon of my plans,
Which oft I barred e'en to Kadijah's mind,

I will no longer be reserved therein.
 A prophet's course lies over cliffs and chasms ;
 'T were best for her who leans upon his hand
 To tread blindfolded o'er the dizzy heights.
 But, thus resolved, thou shalt not want occasion
 For sympathy, since war is now our course,
 With all its perils.

Ay.— I shall fear no danger,
 And I shall be as wise as Solomon
 And silent as the grave to keep thy secrets,
 Till thou shalt marvel what a grave old dame !
 Ayesha is, the child of Abu Beker !

Moh.—Most bravely said? though't were indeed a pity
 If wisdom made thee gray before thy time
 And thou no longer wert my youthful wife.
 But I must hie me to the secret session,
 To give directions for the impending war ;
 And since Ayesha has become my statesman,
 I'll tell her all our plans when I return ! (*Exit.*)

Ay.—Ambition is a sweet and lordly crime.
 Call it Mohammed and ye have its substance ;
 Dub it Ayesha, and behold the reflex !
 What royal sport to conquer him in fancy,
 Who with his mind and arm subdues the nations !
 While he prepares the conquest of the world,
 I'll arm me for the conquest of his heart.
 The key, his confidence, I seem to have.
 Now will I read the general like a book,
 I will divine him and anticipate
 His purpose by my parasite suggestions.
 I'll watch his acts and steal the unuttered word
 From off his very lips. Aye, he shall marvel
 At me, his foresight, priestess, oracle !
 And by this process and the arts of love
 I'll concentrate his thought upon my person.

Though he adore Kadijah in her tomb,
 The dead shall leave the living ample room.
 Sawda, my rival,— whom to wife he'd taken,
 When by Kadijah death left him forsaken—
 Fearing divorce, on her allotted night
 Of need resigned to me her nuptial right.
 Mohammed loves not her, but me alone,
 And, by my charms ! he e'er shall love but one.
 Kadijah's love alone could fill his heart :
 How could I e'er content me with a part ! (*Exit.*)

(Enter a Genius.)

G.—A happy dream is this ! Poor, poor Ayesha !
 Hast thou a thousand arms and lips and eyes,
 That thou wouldst satisfy Abdallah's son ?
 Would'st raise the dead : the loyal, meek apostle,
 Who, though the law allowed him hundred wives,
 Allowed no rival to his loved Kadijah ?
 Though thou be beautiful, and fair in mind,
 Though thou shalt ever be his favored wife,
 Thou ne'er canst fill the heart and the desire
 Of this unbridled victim of ambition.
 The lamb hath donned the nature of the wolf
 And greeds for vengeance and for earthly spoils.
 The sight of blood shall stimulate his lusts,
 And, as he fills Arabia with the slain,
 He'll fill his harem with its fairest women ;
 Till jealous tears shall flow, and thou, Ayesha,
 Shalt see unhappy days. Alas ! I'd help thee ;
 But in Mohammed is an evil Jinn,
 Who holds him fast and will not let me in. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

(The battlefield of Beder. Enter Moh., Hamza, Omar, Abu Beker, Ali, and Warriors.)

Moh.—We are deceived by Abu Sofian.
 He hath escaped us with his caravan,
 And Mecca hath been stirred by messengers.
 There comes the foe spurned mad by our attempt;
 Like famished jackals swoop they o'er the plain,
 To meet the death we'll hurl into their teeth.—
 Lead on your men. Omar thou hold the centre,
 And on my signal break into their ranks
 And scatter them like chaff before the gale.
 Though they outnumber us in man and horse,
 An unseen host will guard our van and flank.
 Courage! My brothers, for in our destined hour
 We all must die, be it in war or peace;
 And he who falls with Islam's sword in hand
 Shall revel in the fields of paradise.

Omar.—Forward! Here's glory in life and gain in
 death!—
 Halt! they would treat with us. Let's hear them. Halt!

(Enter three Meccans. Otha in the lead.)

Otha.—Hear me, ye warriors of the false religion!
 Send forth three exiles of our Meccan kin;
 We are prepared for hand to hand encounter.
 Come forth, ye cowards, to your just reward!
 Ye traitors of your tribe!

Hamza.— Come, Ali, come,
 We'll teach them taunt.

Obeidah.— I'll be the third to meet them.

Hamza.—Here's death ye infidels!

(There is a sharp struggle. Hamza and Ali each slays his man, and, going to the rescue of Obeldah, they dispatch Otha and bear back their wounded comrade. Enter van of Meccan army: Abu Sof. and Abu Jahl at the head.)

Abu Sof.— On, men of Mecca!
Kill the false prophet and his thievish band!
Moh.—Allah destroy them! Victory and revenge!

(The fight rages back and forth. Moh. takes up a handful of dust and throws it into the air toward the enemy.)

Helpless confusion light upon their faces!
Charge, warriors! charge! the victory is ours!

(The Moslems make a desperate assault, and, repulsing the Meccans from the scene, follow after them. Moh. and Abu Beker sheath their swords and remain with their hands lifted toward heaven in prayer.)

They fly! they fly! Thank Allah! they are beaten.
Abu B.—A whirlwind seems to scatter them abroad.

(Enter Moslem Chiefs and Warriors.)

Moh.—Hail, Omar, Ali, Hamza! Hail brave warriors!
The maiden swords of Islam have prevailed.
Thus shall all fare who dare oppose my scepter.
This is the first of countless victories.
Earth's fields are ripe, and Allah's sword shall reap,
And hell shall feed upon the withered sheaves!

(A warrior brings in the head of Abu Jahl.)

War.—Here is the head of thy arch enemy:
The part of Abu Jahl that planned thy ruin.

Moh.— The Pharaoh of Mecca meets his fate.
His soul be cursed! Bear out his hateful visage,
That all may see how heathendom's foul hydra,
In person of this savage Meccan chief
Lost her first head.

War.— Thy will be done, my lord.
I'll call through camp: Behold! ye true believers,

The head of one of heathen hydra's heads ;
And may great Allah and his prophet help us
To the last scale upon the hydra's tail !

(Exit warrior with the head.)

Hamza.— We have a host of prisoners at hand.
What shall we do with them ?

Omar.— Kill every man !

Abu B.—Nay, give them up for ransom. It were base
To slay our relatives thus in cold blood.

Moh.—Omar, thou art like Noah, who invoked
The deluge on the sinners. Abu Beker,
Thou, like our father Abraham, dost plead
For those deserving death. But mercy pleaseth
Heaven more than sacrifice. They shall be spared,
Their ransom being spent to aid the war.
But they who dared to ridicule the Koran,
And those who have unsheathed a treacherous dagger
Against the prophet's life : they shall not live,
Their mischief to prolong. Slay them without mercy !

Hamza.—There are rich spoils. How shall they be
divided ?

Moh.—The distribution shall deal just with all.
Each man shall have an equal share ; but, hear ye
The voice of Allah : To his prophet accrues
One-fifth of all, to be disbursed for alms
And means of war. Thus reads the Koran's law.

Omar.—Shall we who bore the battle's brunt, receive
But equal share with those who guarded camp
And shared not danger, wounds and hardships with us ?
The men are rattling their blood-spattered arms,
And murmuring the threat of mutiny.

Moh.—Our men are stationed on their fittest posts,
And competence or need points each his place.
There's but one touch-stone for each warrior's merit,

And that is strict obedience to command ;
 Therefore shall all receive a like reward
 Who fill the station portioned them in battle.
 Thus Allah compensates obedience.
 Be ye content. I am content with that
 Which falls to me. Come let us share the booty ;
 Then to Medina, whence we'll draw resources
 For further warfare. (*Exeunt all.*)

SCENE III.

(Apartment in Zeyd's house at Medina. Zeinab busied with handiwork.)

Zein.—I wonder where my husband Zeyd doth tarry.
 There's scarce a doubt he waits upon Mohammed.
 He has no other object but Mohammed,
 And scarce a moment's time to waste on me.
 A man who thus neglects his bride elect
 In honeymoon does not deserve a wife.
 The prophet having given him his freedom
 And robed him in the vesture of a son,
 Does that entail eternal condemnation
 To spiritual bondage, and absorption
 In the very worship of the liberator?
 I would we both were freedmen of Mohammed,
 That I might share his errand piety.
 Ah ! where's my veil ? I hear the prophet's footstep.

(Enter Mohammed.)

Moh.—O heavenly nymph ! Thy beauty dazzles me !
 Art thou the wife of Zeyd, but shortly wedded ? —
 Why art thou silent ? — Dost thou fear my gaze ?
 Thou art most beautiful among all women,
 And Zeyd the happiest man, with thee for wife !

I praise the accident that brought me hither
To see thy charms unveiled, thou blushing rose! (*Exit.*)

Zein.—Is Zeyd the happiest man, since I'm his wife?

If that he be, he shows me little thanks.

I well perceive the prophet's hidden meaning!

I will communicate his words to Zeyd,

And, if he loves Mohammed more than me,

Mohammed may become that happiest man.

He is not youthful as my present mate,

Apt to quit earth long ere my hair turns gray,

And if I marry him, I pledge myself

After his death never to wed again,

—The fate of all his wives and paramours;—

Yet who'd not be companion to this victor,

And share his triumphs e'en in widowhood?

What e'en though Zeyd be his adopted son,

The prophet is not bound by common custom

Which makes a marriage with the wedded wife

Of an adopted son incestuous crime.

(Enter Zeyd with bow and quiver.)

Allah greet thee, Zeyd, my Lord! Hast thou been hunting?

Zeyd.—Yes, Zeinab. While ahorse on courier's duty
From my good lord and father, to the army,
My meat, by Allah's bounty, crossed my path,
And here's an antelope for our repast.

Zein.—Well done! I'll help thee dress it for the feast.
Intend'st to have Mohammed here?

Zeyd.— Why, Zeinab?

Zein.—Because he sought thee but a moment hence.

Zeyd.—What said he? Did he ask thee where I tarry?

Zein.—No, but I guessed he was in search of thee.
He came upon me unannounced and left me
No time to veil my face. He started back,
When he beheld me and exclaimed aloud

I were most beautiful of all the women,
 Called me a nymph whose charms had dazzled him,
 And hailed him happiest of all the men
 Whose wife I am.

Zeyd.— What didst thou answer him?

Zein.—I answered nothing; and he left the room.

Zeyd.—He is in love with thee.—I know he is.—

It is his nature. Beauty captures him.—

Zeinab, I love thee, but I owe the prophet

All that I am! I love him as a father

And venerate him e'en beyond my love.—

He shall not pine! Thou shall become his wife

And share the honor of so great a man!

Art thou content?

Zein.— Ah, Zeyd! Canst thou speak thus?

Is this thy love pledged with thy prayers and oaths

And all the vaunting of the amorous knight?

The boasts of thy promotion and achievements,

By which thou hast decoyed me to thy will?

Zeyd.—Obedience to the will of Allah's vicar

Cancels all oaths and must o'ercome the affection

Which, by my life! I vanquish with deep pain.

Thou hast not true devotion to the faith,

Or thou wouldst yield.

Zein.— My will is in thine own.

It breaks my heart; but I'm at thy command.

Zeyd.—Then I will haste to call Mohammed back.

Farewell, dear Zeinab! (*Embraces her.*) Thou shalt be
 more happy

Than thou couldst be with me. My debt is paid

With my own life in thee!

Zein.— Farewell, brave Zeyd! (*Exit Zeyd.*)

Thou faithless man to let thy piety

Win such an easy victory o'er thy love!—

I'm forced to yield, but 't is with silent joy,

To wed a monarch for this pious boy ! (*Exit.*)

(Enter Mohammed with Zeyd.)

Moh.—Although I love her, yet 't is out of question :
Custom forbids and I would not bereave thee.

Zeyd.—But I insist that thou shalt have thy wish.
I will divorce her now, this very day.
Divorce being common in Arabia,
People will toss their heads and say : Well, well,
They've had a falling out ! — That will be all.
And, as to thy espousing her, I know
Thou art superior to Arabian tenets
Which make such union an abomination.
She has consented, and I calmly leave her,
Since I conclude she loves thee more than me.

Moh.—If thou persist herein, then be it so.
With joy I shall receive thy youthful wife.
Since thou art not akin to me in blood,
I deem it not a crime to take her from thee.
Be 't violation of Arabian custom,
I trust that Allah will reveal to me
Some clear solution. Meanwhile, when 't is time,
With grateful heart I will accept the woman.

(Enter Zeinab veiled.)

Zeyd.—Lay off thy veil, behold thy husband, Zeinab.

Zein.—Strange word ! Hereto I called him father-in-law,
And felt most proud of the relationship !

Moh.—Fair child, thy beauty and thy perfect nature
Have destined thee to be a prophet's consort.
As Allah made thee faultless in thy person,
So he would honor thee. Thou art my bride.

Zein.—I stand o'erawed by this too high distinction
And claim no will but in your joint decision.
I am thy humble slave, O great Mohammed !

Moh.—Nay, thou shalt be my dear, respected wife.
 Abide thy time; and till our wedding day
 May Allah keep thee well and fair!

Zeyd.— Adieu! (*Exeunt M. and Z.*)

Zein.—Propitious Heaven! My heart would burst with
 pride,

To think I shall become the prophet's bride!
 O wanton Zeyd, thou hast made light of me,
 And lighter still my love shall make of thee!
 A bachelor is now my husband Zeyd,
 But his wife Zeinab finds a nobler mate!
 Lo! I, a princess by Mohammed's option,
 Thou, Zeyd, my little step-son by adoption! (*Exit.*)



ACT IV.

(A Court in Mecca. Enter Behram and Assad.)

Behram.—Well, Assad, fortune's wheel hath played us
rudely,
And things have taken quite a downward course,
Since last we met.

Assad.— Yes, luck hath long since ceased
To wag his tail. He hangs it low and snarls
And tears the very fat from off our ribs.

Behr.—In the end, I'd be inclined to think this cur
Capers to Allah's bidding after all.

Assad.—It would seem evident, for since Mohammed
Hath raised his standard on Medina's walls
And our allies won to the faith of Allah,
The sinews of our commerce have been cut,
And we are crippled beggars.

Behr.— And what's more,
We're now obliged to sue for peace and mercy
At the prophet's feet. By all the seven hells
And all the seven heavens of the Koran!
I never dreamed this little fawning colt
Would grow to be so dangerous a charger,
And that today we tardy Meccan mules
Must stand with ears adroop and bray for quarter!

Assad.—He grants the Jews no quarter; but it seems
On their hard necks he hath stamped out his rage;
For, now, though Mecca yields in helpless panic,
His clemency toward his most violent foes
Would make the angels blush. Although his vengeance

Spares not the boldest slanderers of Islam
And those whose temper threatens his own safety,
Yet, how be that, I think we citizens
Ought hide for shame to suffer at the hands
Of this ill-treated exile a compassion
So foreign to the nature of an Arab.

Behr.—Thou art right, he offers all the penitent
 Forgiveness and safety, on condition
 That they retreat within their closed dwellings
 And bear no arms.

Assad.— A noble conqueror !
Though there be more of shrewdness than of kindness
In this restraint, I give him credit for it.
I think I shall myself become a Moslem !

Behr.—Aye, so do I, weren't but for policy.
When men like brilliant Amru join the impostor,
'Tis plain, our fathers' gods are doomed to die.
The prophet's friends control the inland trade;
Hence, out of duty to our purse and stomach,
We have the choice of but one battle-cry;
And that is : Death to all the unbelievers !
Great is Mohammed ! Victory to Islam !

Assad.—With such a belly full of true devotion
I trust thou soon becom'st a Moslem chief!
But let us not be seen here out of doors,
Lest the cat be on us, ere we reach our burrows,
And Ali's men in sport cut off our heads.

Behr.—Which, seriously hindering our conversion,
Might put Mohammed out two generals
And leave an awful gap in Islam's heaven! (*Exeunt.*)

(Enter Amgrad, Margiana and slaves.)

Amg.—Margiana, my wife, this is the chosen court,
Wherein Mohammed and his generals
Will hold their session. Though until this day

We have been counted with his enemies,
 We must conceal our choler from the foe,
 Now that he triumphs as our conqueror.
 In mask of reconciliation we must meet him,
 To gain his grace. (*To slaves.*) Here, Hassan, Beder, Safie :
 Thou place these palms, thou tapestry and awnings,
 Thou, girl, distribute these sweet-scenting waters,
 That the air about may be as pure and fragrant
 As breath of evening o'er a vale of roses.

(He follows the slaves to their work.)

Marg.—Make haste, and let your fancy guide your
 work — (*to slaves*)
 To-morrow ye shall have a holiday. —

(Enter Cassim with bow and quiver and carrying a bird pierced by an arrow.)

Cassim, my son ! where wert thou playing, child ?

Cas.—Out on the hills. I've tested my new bow,
 And see, I've shot a bird upon the wing.
 Poor creature ! when it struggled vain with death,
 I wished I had not aimed so well.

Marg.— Poor thing !
 But be consoled. Mohammed's heaven hath
 A place e'en for these birds ! But alas, my boy,
 If Omar hears thou art so good a marksman,
 He soon will take thee from thy mother's care
 And make thee archer in the Moslem armies.

Cas.—Do they kill birds ?

Marg.— Nay, they slay innocent men,
 The "unbelievers," whom they'd grant no place
 In heaven but would through death hurl down to hell
 And torture.

Cas.— Mother, I'll not be an archer :
 I would not bring distress to any man.

Marg.—Thou hast too kind a heart for a Mussulman,
Cassim, my darling! Would there were nobler fame
In store for thee than that of war and conquest.

(A rattling noise is heard.)

Cas.—Whence is that noise, mother?

Marg.— 'T is the Moslem pilgrims
Who stone the devil in commemoration
Of the same feat performed by Abraham,
When the fiend would have him disobey Heaven's orders.

Cas.—Have they not killed him yet?

Marg.— Nor will, my son.

Cas.—Then I'll become a famous archer, mother,
And rid the world of the devil.

Marg.— A noble purpose!
But earthly missiles will not conquer evil;
Yet, were all men as thou, my honest boy,
There were no fiend; for such as thou he is dead,
Therefore think not of him, remain thus, child,
And thou shalt never in all time to come
Know, think, or fear a devil. Look, my boy,
Where the long train of pilgrims wends its way
In solemn circuits round the sanctuary
Of the Caäba.

Cas.— Yes, I see them well,
And now they bathe in Zem Zem. Whence, O mother,
Came this great temple here?

Marg.— I'll tell thee the story
As it was told to me. When our first parents
Were hurled from paradise, Eve, being weak
And offering no resistance, like a plummet
Fell on Arabia; Adam, being rebellious
And struggling 'gainst his fate, was hurled afar
Upon Ceylon, the lonely Indian isle.
Two hundred years these wretched penitents
Were thus divorced.

Cas.— Think of 't, two hundred years !
 Hadst thou been parted thus long from my father,
 What hadst thou done?

Marg.— I know not child. I think
 That I had wept, and wept till his return.—
 But list to the conclusion of the story :
 Finally on the mountain Arafat,
 O'er yonder, Adam found his Eve again.
 Then, on their prayer, Allah sent down the Caäba,
 Built up of misty clouds and like the shrine
 O'erhead in paradise. Therein they worshipped
 Till death ; when Seth, their son, built out of stone
 A likeness of the former fane ; but the Flood
 Swept it away. At last great Ishmael,
 Our ancestor, with the aid of Abraham,
 Built up the temple as it stands today
 Near the well Zem Zem, that clear pearly spring
 Of sacred water which the angel showed
 To Hagar when she bewailed her son as lost ;
 And in the wall he set the snow-white stone
 That fell from paradise when Adam fell ;
 And, imitating the devoted angels,
 Who thus encompass Allah's throne on high,
 He daily made seven circuits round the shrine,
 And worshipped there as now Mohammed worships,
 Taught by old custom.

Cas.— But is it not strange
 That the white stone in the Caäba's wall
 Should through the kiss of pilgrims grow so black?
 Who'd think there were such vileness in a kiss?

Marg.—It is the sin and filth of wicked men
 That turned it black. Had their devout caresses
 All been as thine, my sturdy, innocent boy,
 I trow, the stone were white until this day. (*Kissing her*
boy.)

Now, Cassim, take thy bow and greet thy father :

Here comes he. (*Amg. approaches.*)

Amg.— Ah, how does my little bowman?
Here is a target. Master, show thy skill.

(He puts an orange on the tip of his spear and holds it aloft.)

Cas.—O father, that's an easy mark for me.

(Shoots, and his arrow passes through the orange.)

Amg.—Well done, my lad. Now go and seek thy play-mates ;

Tomorrow I will mount thee on thy charger,
And we will ride together o'er the mountains.

There—run, my lad.

Cas.— Would we could go today,
I scarce can await the morrow. (*He scampers away.*)

Marg.— A brave boy !

Amg.—He hath a brave mother !

Marg.— Ah, and a knightly father !

With but one fault, commended much upon :

That he'll not dance to the great Prophet's timbrel !—

Life of my life ! dost thou recall the morn,

When thou didst woo me in Kadijah's garden ?

(Peace to her soul !) How I did mock and tease

And thou didst boast and threaten in good humor ?

Yes, Amgrad, thou hast haply proved to be

More gentleman than prophet ; for though by wisdom

And clever management in trade thou hast gained

Great wealth, thou ne'er hast wrought into a harem

Our home, as, following custom and Mohammed,

The wealthy do. Nor hast thou given me cause

For jealousy, as thou didst once predict ;

And now in this eighth year of the Hejira

There's not an uncovered thought between our hearts,

Which, lurking in the shadow of distrust,

Might sally forth and blast our happiness.

Amg.—Dear Margiana, well thou knowest the reason.
 There be such men — their name is legion :
 'Mongst them Mohammed — who in seeking their mate
 For life, seek more for beauty than for mind
 And take the first, where both are not combined,
 As they are in thee. Then their affection, finding
 Nothing of lasting charm in languid form,
 Tires of its object and soon seeks new homes
 Of the same frailty, and new disappointments
 Are the inevitable outcome. 'T is the curse
 Of men's despotic nature, which would make
 Woman in Eve inventress of factition,
 And — quite unwilling to reject the example —
 To-day its brainless instrument. The stronger
 In frame, men assert the old cursed selfishness,
 The cause of all damnation, and would bar
 Their weaker counterparts the realm of thought
 And scope of reason, thinking thus the easier
 To maintain coveted supremacy ;
 But preciously for many and many an age
 They've bought this folly. The wares, adulterated
 By the verdict of the fathers, to the sons
 Came worthless brilliants, of a handsome cut,
 But, scarcely worn, losing by mere exposure
 Their borrowed lustre. Loathing discontent
 Is the result. But few unpriced jewels
 In woman's form Arabia contains,
 Whose lustre is of infinite duration,
 Being the light of mind through mortal form,
 And one of these rare jewels, Margiana,
 I've found in thee !

Marg.— Thou mak'st me proud, my lord.
 I know, the secret of our happiness
 Lies in the accord of our ascending thoughts ;
 Yet, spite of all, in this unlooked-for era

There threatens even our unclouded lives
 The coward incubus of jealousy.
 Mohammed hath brought chaos back to heaven,
 Promising to each warrior of his faith
 A host of heavenly maids, in whose caresses
 He revels on through all eternity.
 Then what may be my lot, when, after death,
 Thou having by force become a Mussulman,
 I follow thee to paradise! — O Amgrad
 What worlds must be between our hearts and envy,
 That I must seek its cause beyond the tomb!

Amg.—And in thy heart thou laughst at the impostor
 And at my caricature in this vile heaven!
 Good cause Mohammed hath for his invention!
 That kite, who since our mutual benefactress
 Passed out through death, and war hath given him power,
 Swoops from his aerie on Medina's towers
 On whate'er dove his lusting eye desires—
 His appetites as those of his rude bandits,
 Over-incensed, crave such luxurious food.
 Himself, grown gross and carnal with the years,
 Hath crammed his harem here, and in the hereafter
 Would have exchange for the rebellious herd
 Now making life a burden for him. Fie!
 I would not enter with him such a heaven
 Though he should dub me prince of all the realm;
 Nor shall we longer here abide in Mecca
 With him as lord. Myself and fifty merchants,
 Some of them Christians, have ta'en secret counsel,
 To emigrate to Phrygia and there
 Invoke protection of the Emperor
 Of Eastern Rome. What thinkst thou of our plan?

Marg.—God speed it, Amgrad! Once in Caesar's realm
 We may if so inclined freely commune
 With the Christian church of Greece, in which we'll find

Hope, sympathy, and honor for our son.

Amg.—Thou arguest well; and may our joined purpose
Soothe our departure from our native city.
Yet for today we owe the prophet homage,
Lest he avenge himself on our estate. —
Here comes he with his mighty retinue.
Step we aside to view his glorious triumph,
Ere we depart.

Marg.— But be we not enticed
By power and florid speech, since 'twere the bane
Of our souls' peace; and when we leave this region,
Let it be said that ne'er in prouder mood
Did royal pair lay down their purple robes,
Scorn the usurper and with faithful few
Go into exile. (*They step aside.*)

(Enter Mohammed with his generals and a number of warriors bearing various standards, followed by Abu Sofian, Abu Jahl and others.)

Moh.— Hail, mother of the cities! Hail, Mecca,
Thou stronghold built of mighty Ishmael!
Hail, cradle of Mohammed! Hail, ye markstones
Of joy and pain, of honor and disgrace!
I come to purge thee of thy impious shame,
Not with a stream of blood, but with the fire
Of Islam's faith. I come in pilgrim's garb,
And with these hands I've broke in thousand fragments
The effigies of thy idolatry.
Seven times I've led the circuit round thy shrine,
Seven times performed the duties of the pilgrim,
And dedicated thee to Allah's service.
Thy citizens have sworn fidelity
To Allah and his prophet. Praised be God,
Who gives this bloodless triumph to his servant! —
Thou, Abu Sofian, my mortal foe,
Hast been forgiven;

Abu Sof.— And in gratitude,
Shall serve thee to my end.

Moh.— And thou, black slave,
Whose sword slew Hamza ; Henda, who devoured
His heart in hateful frenzy ; thou, young Abdallah,
Who dared amend the sacred Koran's text ;
Thou, son of Abu Jahl, who sought my life :
Ye all have felt that in the conqueror
Mercy is nobler far than bootless vengeance.

Omar.—O prophet, thou hast been too lenient ;
All thou hast pardoned have deserved to die.
Give thou the word, and I will cleave them through,
And hurl their stubborn spirits to Jehenna !

Moh.—Omar, thou hast not learned that nobler virtue,
Compassion. Thou art ever all too zealous
To serve me with the sabre's edge. Revenge
In weakness wronged, I hold, is fair and just ;
Part re-adjustment of the scale of justice,
Causing more hate, yet balancing the past —
Nor has it wanted its due execution—
But in the conqueror who stands secure,
A heinous crime. The Arabs and the Jews
Have felt our rage in our extremity ;
But now were slaughter crime and vengeance shame,
When kindness, backed by power, is more potent
Than violence.

(Enter Khaled.)

Abu B.— Here comes the youthful Khaled,
Our fire-wielding convert.

Moh.— What news, Khaled ?

Khaled.—Prophet of Allah, ardent in thy service
I led a squadron through the plain to eastward,
There far and wide tore down the blazing altars,
And with their flames destroyed the heathen temples.

Moh.—Thou art a zealous proselyte, O Khaled !
 So much the less of hell shall be for Moslems,
 So much the more for infidels, as ye
 Have foraged flames with these thrice-cursed temples.

Khal.—Midst smoke and fire, with my daring band
 I broke the idols in the shrine of Uzza,
 When, with disheveled hair and bulging eyes,
 A hag as black as death sprang into the temple
 Naked, and with her withered, bony arms,
 Hacked at the air and thrust her finger-nails
 Into our faces, shrieking like the fiend.
 I drew my sword and clove her through the breast ;
 She clasped the hilt and bit upon the blade,
 And staggered cursing, till another thrust
 Let loose her howling ghost.

Moh.— Ah, it was Uzza
 Herself, that black companion of the fiend
 Whom men adore in their iniquity,
 That thou hast rid the faithful of, brave Khaled.
 Thou shouldst have honor, since thou hast deprived
 The devil's force of this incarnate evil.
 O ye defenders of the holy Koran ! (*To all.*)
 There nears the day when not an effigy
 Of god or demon shall be left to tempt
 The eyes of men to turn away from heaven.
 I've taught you, warriors, that ordained of Allah :
 To worship only him and love your brethren,
 Avoid all fetishes and live in faith,
 Deal justly with your fellows, supply the needy,
 Look not with scorn upon inferiors,
 With prayer and alms to nourish piety,
 And be arrayed against the day of judgment
 In true devotion's undefiled garb.
 But now your foremost duty still is war,
 And paradise is 'neath the shade of swords,

Therefore renew your oaths to stand by me
 Whate'er befall ; and in our bold campaign
 Such miracles ye'll see, shall shake the earth
 In her foundation !

Abu B.— By the hosts of heaven !
 Whither thou lead be't to the end of space,
 We are thy satellites ! Now and forever
 Our friends thy friends, thy enemies our foes !

All.—Amen ! We swear it !

Moh.— And the heavens respond !
 Now, come, we will complete our triumph here ;
 Then, turning to Medina, thence we'll bear
 Our banner to the limits of the earth
 And take her captive !— On !

All.— Allah Ackbar ! (*Exeunt.*)



ACT V.

SCENE I.

(A room in Mohammed's house at Medina. Enter Ayesha and Zeinab.)

Ay.—'Twere time thou shouldst admit in thy deportment
That I am mistress here, thou an intruder
Granted a humble place beneath the aerie
Where I before was instituted.

Zein.— Fie!

What care I who was first in the seraglio,
So long as I have gained superior favor?

Ay.—Get thee gone! I will not listen to thy boasts.
I'd rather be companion of a lizard
Or with a viper share its slimy cave,
Than bear with such a haughty interloper!
Thou shouldst be scourged for thy insolence!

Zein.—And thou be cudgeled for thy arrogance!

Ay.—I shall complain of thee before Mohammed.

Zein.—What boots it? Did Mohammed not this day
Declare me most beloved of all his wives?

Will not my lightest word, my merest smile
Refute more than thy most enforced complaint?

Ay.—Thou liest! for he confessed the same to me,
When last he passed with me the accustomed time,
And oft before he vowed that but to me
His soul was mated in the true affection
That outlives passion.

Zein.— Judging by thy tale,
He might be flattering all his women thus.

Ay.—Wouldst thou accuse the prophet of a lie?

Zein.—I speak but with thy tongue that bore the lie.

Ay.—Thy tongue is poisoned like a reptile's sting,
Thou witch, that with thy wanton charms seduced
The prophet's heart!

Zein.— And thou wouldst have Mohammed
Subject to craft? Was not our railed-at marriage
Confirmed by Allah, when he sent a message
To justify our union, since that Zeyd
Was but a son adopted of Mohammed?
Be not so puffed, remembering the shadow
That hangs o'er thee, since thou wert found at night
Roving alone with a young cavalier!

Ay.—Naught but malignity will thus recall
The slander, which, divulged by thy false sister
At thy request, that thou might'st rise in favor,
Has been refuted, not by men alone,
But by a revelation to the prophet
From the All-knowing—

Zein.— Still some do suspect thee
And whisper as they pass: There goes Ayesha,
Who roves o' nights with her young lover Safwan!

Ay.—A curse is hurled upon them in the Koran,
Which thou art subject to before all others,
For being mother to this malediction.
Thou art incapable of bringing forth
Aught that is good, and all the race of serpents
Do claim thee for their matron!

Zein.— Thou too shameless
To bear a name! I'll have thy beauty marred,
I'll have thy tongue torn out for those vile words!

Ay.—An empty threat! Thou being Mohammed's
spouse—
If thou deserve the title—art too cautious
To make thyself an object of reproach

For all the world, through vengeful violence.

Zein.—What though I were, I'll loose the tongue of fame
And feed all rumor baneful to thy name;
And in my heart's profoundest privacy
I'll nourish hate toward thee eternally! (*Exit.*)

Ay.—Where many love and one is loved alone,
There one 'gainst many robbers holds love's throne!
This wench and thirteen others vie in vain,
Love's undisputed sway from me to gain. —
Thou jealous girl, I'll scorn thee all my life
And prove that I'm Mohammed's only wife. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

(Scene in the mountains, near Mecca. Enter Genius and Fairy.)

G.—Here, my fay, we are again,
Panting like a hurricane,
Sweating with our hot exertion
In the infidels' conversion.

F.—Ah, such game through storm and fire
E'en would make a ghost perspire!

G.—Perched on mountains, rocks and trees,
We've been gleaming auspices;
Urging on Mohammed's arms,
Shielding him from fatal charms,
Spreading thousand lying tales
Of the prophet's miracles,
Riding wild with dream and vision
On the heathens' superstition,
Scaring them in dreadful night
Faith to Islam's cause to plight,
Spreading fear through all creation
With the Koran's fierce damnation,
Till the Moslems' very sight
Puts all hostile force to flight.

F.—'T is a sport without a mate
 Thus to lend the prophet aid,
 Sharpen Islam's flashing swords,
 Level hills and fill up fords,
 That like one tremendous wave
 Islam sweeps from Kaf to Kaf.

G.—In the fiery winds we race,
 Beat the heathen in the face,
 Dry the wells, kill date and peach,
 Drive the game far out of reach,
 Stir rebellions and seditions,
 Frighten men with apparitions,
 Ride the storm and stride the thunder,
 Scatter foes with fear and wonder,
 Till fanatic Mussulmans
 Cut them down with sword and lance.

F.—Love gives power to the sword ;
 Love is valor's sweet reward ;
 Since Mohammed we would please,
 Him we gave the fond disease :
 Sped the love-awakening dart,
 Many-headed through his heart,
 Till each maid of fair creation
 Blinds him with infatuation,
 And to soothe his restless life,
 He has taken wife on wife :
 Though his men he grants but four
 He is e'er espousing more,
 Till e'en these polygamists
 Shake their heads and clench their fists,
 And our little amorous favor
 Spreads abroad suspicious savor !

G.—That all calumny may cease,
 We must cure this weak disease ;
 For if prophets thus be wiving,

Other men would soon be hiving.
 We will hide his amities
 In the bottom of the seas.
 Be he sober as before,
 Wise in peace as brave in war ;
 Now his campaign is victorious,
 May he ever reign most glorious.

(Enter Fate.)

F.—Who comes here with sword and quivering thread?

Fate.—Know I am Mohammed's Fate.

From the web of the eternal net
 I've untangled well his mortal thread.
 Now 'tis cut with my unyielding knife,
 And this hour beats out Mohammed's life.—
 Fly, ye scamps, ye have out-played your game.
 Away to Jinnestan, from where ye came !

G.—Naught hath power Fate to stay.

We have done, my elf, away ! (*Exeunt F. and G.*)

Fate.—As a man doth sow, so shall he reap ;
 Prophet thou hast sown with violence,
 Now thyself shall perish through revenge :
 Thus doth Fate an even balance keep.
 Thou hast dreamed the dream of thy ambition ;
 Fate is armed to void the glorious vision.
 O how light is this humanity !
 Blind to life and slave to vanity ! (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.

(Mohammed's home at Medina. Enter Miriam.)

Mir.—Jehovah's curse descend upon Mohammed,
 The persecutor of our Jewish race,
 The monster, who would lure the sons of Jacob
 Into his net of villainous imposture !

But Jacob's children are not giddy Arabs ;
 Therefore this despot would exterminate them,
 And with their wealth flood truth from off the earth.
 My kinsmen have his bloody warriors slain,
 My mother and my sisters sold as slaves,
 And I've perceived Mohammed's doting eye
 Gaze on my figure and o'erheard his words
 In which he spoke his purpose to his friends
 To wed me ! Am I not an only bride
 Of Judah, who hath slipped their murderous hands ?
 And should become a jealous paramour
 Within the crowded harem of this tyrant,
 Mid fifteen wives and slavish concubines ?
 Nay, rather would I die a faithful Jewess
 And rid my nation of this monstrous scourge.
 Ah ! never Miriam deserts her lover
 To be Mohammed's toy ! Were I a man,
 I'd have a sword for him. I'm but a girl
 Too weak for arms ; but here is death potential
 In this sweet powder ; this, I know, the vessel
 From which Mohammed drinks oft times a day.
 I'll mix a potion that will silence him
 Forever and bring peace to Israel.

(Mixes poison in M.'s drinking vessel.)

I've done my duty, O my Jewish brethren ;
 My bridegroom I revenge our threatened hopes. —
 Now venom from the baneful root distilled,
 Amend thou what my weakness wants of courage,
 Creep through the fibres of his haughty veins,
 Into the nether dungeon of his heart ;
 There blast its walls and wage thy fatal war,
 And kill earth's canker at the very core ! (*Exit.*)

(Enter Mohammed.)

Moh.—Now, race of Ishmael, thy hour hath come
 To bear thy arms from out thy desert fortress
 And fire earth and sea with thy new faith !
 Thou — not the sons of Israel — art chosen
 To force thy doctrines on the nations' mind.
 Arabia is mine, its city strongholds ;
 And those who dwell in tents flock to my banner.
 Now my young hope, impetuous Osama,
 Revenge the death of Zeyd slain by our foes,
 And break the wall 'tween Syria and Islam.
 A ponderous army trust I to thy hand ;
 Return a victor to thy native land !
 Arabia now shall be the beacon-light
 To cast its glory o'er the heathen night !
 The only way the nations to reform
 Is to enforce a blessing with a storm ;
 Till minds astray submit in fear and awe
 And earth be fertile for a milder law.—
 Till then the law is death or crushing tribute
 For infidels.— In many furious battles
 Have I with clanging sword led the affray.
 I've been devout and faithful in the act
 As in the word to my exalted purpose,
 To paint my creed upon the face of Earth
 In human gore.— Now rest thy soul, Mohammed,
 Here is refreshment. (*Takes the pitcher and drinks.*)

Rest from bloody war,
 While victory sends her messengers to thee.—
 What morbid drowsiness o'ercomes my brain
 And robs my faculties their wonted fire?
 Have I o'erdone the duties of the day?
 I'd rest my head and sleep,— but ah ! — these thrusts
 As of a dagger through my pounding heart — !
 Murder and treason ! Poison ! Death !

(Enter ghost of Waraka.)

War.— Mohammed !
 Call not the living to thy aid. Thy doom
 Is sealed.

Moh.— Who art thou?

War.— I am Waraka,
 The comrade of thy youthful contemplations,
 Who shared with thee the hope that Abraham's faith
 Might be revived among the seed of Hagar.

Moh.—But thou wert laid long since into thy grave.

War.—Forsooth, and thou hast one foot in the grave.

Moh.—Ah ! so it is. This pain ! This mortal pain !

War.—Hear me, Mohammed, since thou hast but moments
 Left thee to live. I, being unburdened spirit
 Deprived of substance,—thus revealed to thee
 In human form, that thy weak mortal eyes
 May know me as thou knew'st me in thy youth—
 It is within my power, unhemmed by time
 Or space, to dart into the distant future.
 Thou hast, Mohammed, done a mighty work
 For thy idolatrous Arabia
 And lived a pond'rous life of glorious issue ;—
 But neither thou nor I perceived the light
 That rose before us in the Nazarine.
 Thou knew'st not him, thou saw'st his false disciples
 At mutual war. His precepts most divine
 Were hidden to thy sight, or thou hadst thought it
 An honor to be called his humble servant.
 Thy oft despair defiled with smut from hell
 The Koran's law, converted love to hate ;
 And since thou hast not time to mend the fault,
 Thy Moslems, conquering worlds with violence,
 In imitation of thy baser toils,
 Shall sink o'ersaturate with blood and spoils,
 And in vile pestilence of luxury
 Burst with the surfeit of their gluttony,

Shall yield, unnervèd by thy soul's disease,
To him, whose only sword was love and peace.

Moh.—Away, thou liar ! Iblis taught thee this,
The spirit of the pit.

War.— Friend of my youth !
I pardon thee for this thy honest zeal.
Die thou in peace. There's virtue in thy purpose,
Howe'er it stray ; and God's omnipotence
Can shape it all aright. (*Ghost disappears.*)

Moh.—I'll not believe thee, messenger of gloom,
And confident I sink into my tomb ;
Till I shall see that hoped for but unknown,
This sword in hand, before great Allah's throne.

(Enter Abu Beker.)

Com'st thou to see me die ? O Abu Beker,
Some treacherous hand (God knows what hand it was)
Hath mingled poison with my drink !

Abu B.— O horror !
I'll call a doctor.

Moh.— Stay. It is too late.

Abu B.—Too late ! too late !—then I will yet make haste
To equip me for the journey. Abu Beker
Hath been thy comrade in thy course of triumph
As in the Hejrah. He will not be absent,
When thou dost enter paradise. Here's eternal
Companionship !

(Takes up the vessel to drink. M. dashes it out of his hand.)

Moh.— Fie on thy rash intent !
Think not of self-destruction ! Be composed.
For thee is gain in life, for me is death.
I'm like thyself, a sinful, mortal man,
Who must submit when Death knocks at his door
And calmly yield to the inevitable.

Thy task is, work until thy hour hath come,
My lot to enter heaven's joyful groves.

Abu B.—Revenge! revenge upon the murderer!

Moh.—Revenge is Allah's, now that all is over.
May he forgive! I enter with the faithful
Into the mansions of the blessed souls.
My mission's over and my life-work done,
And I can say that none beneath my banner
But loves me and receives great recompense
For what he suffered in the cause of Islam.

Abu B.—Thou shalt revive! Mohammed shall not die!

Moh.—My hour hath come, as sure as Allah lives.
Go, Abu Beker, to the mosque and pray,
Where I was wont to stand? 'Tis in my power
To choose whome'er I wish, my place to fill.
Go, it is time; and call Ayesha hither.
May Allah grant thee wisdom, faith, and power
To spread the faith and govern well my people
With judgment milder than the Koran's law.

Abu B.—My love doth chain me fast. I cannot leave thee!

Moh.—My fate's decreed of Allah. Be content.
Leave me and fill thy post, my faithful vicar.

Abu B.—Farewell, Mohammed, my beloved lord! (*Exit.*)

Moh.—This is the man supremely competent
To be my calif, all is well and safe
Beneath his guidance.—Ah!—this duty done,
I feel the faintness and the pangs return
And draw me to eternity's dark threshold.
Ah, dreadful eminence! Ah, solitude
Of all most lonely! Silent brink of death!
Thy terrors are for others than myself,
Whose thoughts so oft have wandered 'neath thy shades.
Swing wide, strong ports, that mortals vain would pierce!
Here knocks a wanderer. (*Enter Ayesha.*) Farewell, Ayesha!

Joy of mine age and angel of my death! —
 O God! — My guilty soul! — Forgive my sins! —
 Where is it? — Where? — the blood-befouled Koran?
 I must revise it! — Ah! — it is too late!
 Be it so! — Among the blessed associates
 In paradise!

(He lifts his hands as for a blessing and draws obscure signs in the air, then falls back upon a divan and dies.)

Ay.—Mohammed! Allah! Is this swoon or sleep?
 Death? Never! never! Allah's prophet dead?
 Mohammed dead, my fond, my worshipped husband?
 Should heaven forget itself and cut him off
 Thus in the middle of his course of triumph?
 Speak, O Mohammed! Ah! the mighty voice
 That stirred the multitude with golden words
 Hath lost its utterance. Royalty hath fled
 And leaves an empire to its favored heirs.
 Weep, O Ayesha! Weep with bloody tears!
 No other hath a right to weep as thou:
 Thou in his glorious life and hour of death
 The nearest to his heaven-communing heart.
 Now that thy lord hath left his earthly day,
 Weep on, lone heart, and weep thy life away!

(Throws herself over the corpse with a piercing cry. Enter the wives of Mohammed, wailing, beating their breasts and tearing their hair, followed by Omar, Ali, Khaled, and other chiefs and warriors. There is tumult and loud lamenting.)

Ali.—Woe to us! Rumor hath spoke all too true.
 Here lies he dead who raised us all to life! —
 O earth, how canst thou hold thy wonted calm,
 When this thy stay hath fallen! Sun of day,
 Wilt thou not hide in night's deep veil of mourning,
 When such a part of thee hath left the world!
1st Warrior.—He lives! he lives! the prophet cannot die.

